Friends of the Department of English Local History

NEWSLETTER

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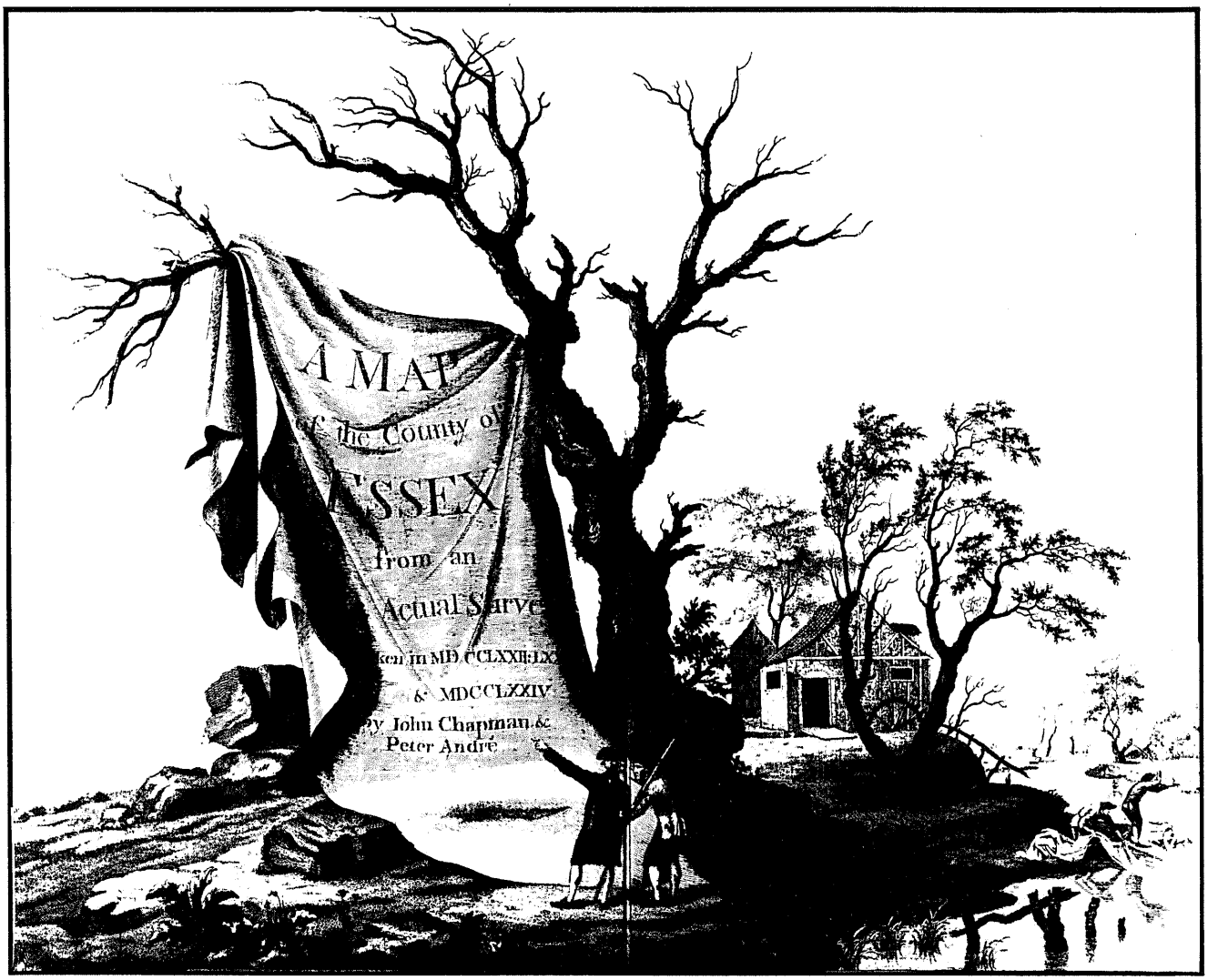

EDITORIAL

Launched not much more than a year ago, the Friends of the Department of English Local History now number nearly 200: about 140 paid-up members and, in addition, the Department's registered students who this year for the first time exceed the figure of 50. This is a most encouraging beginning. The Newsletter is now in place as an annual event, and so is the W.G. Hoskins Lecture which, last June, was attended by an audience of over 80 - a very successful afternoon both academically and socially.

From the point of view of **finance** a large membership means a healthy bank balance. Please do help us to maintain this position by posting your subscription to Anne Mitson as soon as possible, because if reminders have to be sent the funds are diminished accordingly. Part of your subscription goes towards the costs of the Newsletter, which is why we have decided to make this issue bigger and better than its predecessors; part on the cost of the Hoskins Lecture. Remaining sums will be spent on amenities, equipment, books and maps for Marc Fitch House, to be used and enjoyed by students, staff and, of course, by visiting Friends. Our balance is deftly managed by John Goodacre and the time will soon come when we can decide on how it should be spent.

Our financial position was enhanced by the surprisingly large profits of a **booksale** held last March. The next booksale, it has been decided, will be held on the occasion of the second W.G. Hoskins Lecture on May 4th. Please bring unwanted books with you or, alternatively, send them to 'Booksale', c/o the Department, in advance of that date.

As usual the **Newsletter** reports on recent events in the Department. The first Hoskins Lecture has already been mentioned. Equally successful was the international conference convened by David Postles on 'Naming, society and regional identity'. Among the participants at the meeting was Dr Marc Fitch whose continuing interest in the Department has also been shown this year by his generous donation of the new 20-volume edition of the Oxford English Dictionary. His gift is in memory of Beatrice Quennell and each volume bears a bookplate recording that fact. This issue of the Newsletter also looks back to the past, with pieces by Alan Everitt and Professor Ugawa on the Department of English Local History in its infancy.

Contributions to the next Newsletter will be welcome. In this issue, as well as providing a complete list (and abstracts in some cases) of printed works, theses and dissertations by staff and students, we are giving summaries of books and pamphlets written by Friends, a service which is intended to help authors to advertize their work. The editor would like to receive further material of this kind, and also pieces on events, organizations and projects of interest to local historians - such as those towards the end of this issue on local history in the National Curriculum, on the Shapwick Project, the Garden History Society and on the Black Cultural Archives project.

This issue's **production team** comprised Harold Fox (editor); Margery Tranter, Ralph Weedon and Pauline Whitmore (word processing); Ralph Weedon and Paul Ell (fonts and columns); Angela Chorley and Kamlesh Chandarana (cover); and the University's Reprographic Unit (printing). Distribution is by Dr Anne Mitson. The **cover** shows the title page of the atlas of Essex drawn by Chapman and Andre in 1777 (from the Marc Fitch Fund Library).

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Contributions to and comments on the Newsletter: Dr Harold Fox, at the Department's address.

EVENTS IN THE DEPARTMENT

Inaugural Lecture. A Tale of two Frontiers: the Limits of Local History Explored

Professor Phythian-Adams began his inaugural lecture by outlining the development of English Local History as an academic subject, and by stressing the long-established pioneering role of the Department which has been loyally supported by Leicester University for over 40 years. The Department's resources have recently benefited too from the immense generosity of the Marc Fitch Fund and of Dr Fitch himself, and thus remains the major institutional centre for postgraduate and post-doctoral research and training in the country. Our new Professor also signalled his intention to support the subject against its detractors and defended its relevance to modern society, rightly referring to the large number of the public actively engaged in its study.

The main body of the inaugural lecture started with the contention that academic English Local History is not simply compartmentalised national history, but rather the mediator between the study of the nation and the investigation of its individual component parts. Of course at neither level was society unified or static, and Professor Phythian-Adams encouraged local historians to broaden their cultural vision to embrace a more British and a less insular view; perhaps what is now needed, he suggested, is a native equivalent to Braudel.

Today, Local History is concerned not simply with the study of communities, but with the identification too of past 'local societies' and their relationship to each other. Such societies could have different sizes and forms, but Professor Phythian-Adams was able to suggest the following four criteria as critical to any definition: existence of a coherent inhabited territory; an enduring form of

social organization; a corpus of shared cultural associations; a body of indigenous families. Although he emphasized that real lines of demarcation are often blurred, many of the 'territories' encompassing these societies appear to have persisted over the centuries. This was the case even in some nineteenth-century industrial and urban contexts. The major theme to be stressed, however, was the interplay between on the one hand such long-term continuities - especially where topographical constraints, like watersheds or thinly populated wold landscapes (already the subject of much research by Alan Everitt and Harold Fox) helped to mould the disposition of societies and settlements on the ground usually within the extent of a shire - and, on the other hand, the medium-term rhythms of the changing local responses of each society to fresh opportunities or challenges. Such rhythms indeed might be seen also as genuinely filling that awkward long gap between 'Origin and Growth', in H.P.R. Finberg's famous definition of the local historian's task, and the 'Decline and Fall' of a local social entity.

To illustrate the phasing and character of change, Professor Phythian-Adams then treated us to a masterly survey of the development of Cumbrian society, ranging from the prehistoric tribes of the Brigantes and the Carvetii, through the period of raiding on the Border, to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century industrial era. Here were examined the ways in which local societies could be distinguished and their inter-relationships and external influences taken into account. Central to his argument was the idea that the directional focus of territories shifted relative to each other, as was the case with nation states. At different times Cumberland has been both margin and heartland, Carlisle either a border English city or a centre for mid-western Britain. Sometimes the region was cut off from Scotland; at other times it looked westward as a province of the Irish Sea in company with the Scottish littoral of the Solway Firth. Even in the nineteenth century Cumberland was, mooted Professor Phythian-Adams, to some extent re-populated by the 'Celts' - Scottish, Irish, Welsh, Cornish, etc. - and as such could not be regarded as strictly a part of the 'English North'. Although an inland comparison was more difficult to define, the challenge was not shirked and the changing perceptions of Leicestershire's position as, alternately, the south of the North and north of the South, were then unravelled. Such alignments and re-alignments, the speaker argued, finally, might be regarded as one of the mechanisms whereby regional identities were perpetuated at the expense of national homogeneity.

An enthusiastic audience no doubt fairly concluded that the frontiers of Local History can encompass many challenges, many types of community and many local historians.

Ralph Weedon and Chris Thornton

'Give a Don a Bad Name': Conference on Naming, Society and Regional Identity

'Give a don a bad name...' and he will organize a symposium to assess the significance of that naming pattern. Thus, about thirty participants congregated at Marc Fitch House over a long weekend (6-8 July) to discuss the relationships between naming, society and regional identity. Eleven papers were presented by contributors with different approaches, providing a truly inter-disciplinary conflation: local historians, bio-anthropologists, historical geographers and historical demographers. Some papers were concerned with the actual pattern and forming of naming, others with those social structures and organisations which influenced patterns of names.

Analogous papers were loosely grouped into sessions. The first session, on Friday afternoon, introduced the concept of isonymy and genetic structure: the process by which the genetic structure of local societies can be inferred from concentrations of surnames. We were fortunate to have Gabriel Lasker, from Illinois, to explain the general application of this technique, and Malcolm Smith (Durham) to illustrate it through some case studies of English local communities in the nineteenth century. The methodology, contentious to some, generated considerable discussion.

Isonymy was a concept, however, which would not rest quietly, being resurrected on Saturday morning by Dan Smith, from Illinois, in the session on North America. He applied the technique to assess aspects of social organisation in Massachusetts in the 1770s. Roger Thompson (UEA) presented an equally important paper on those emigrants from East Anglia who constituted the vast proportion of the Great Migration to North America in the 1630s and 1640s. His concern was the nature of their life-cycles before emigration, and the social units through which they emigrated.

The session on Saturday afternoon was devoted to earlier influences on naming patterns. Gillian Fellows-Jensen (Kobenhavns Universitets) illuminated the processes of Old Scandinavian settlement of the British Isles, in particular its regional nature and its effect on naming patterns. A more broad-ranging assessment of the variables affecting naming during the Middle English period was presented by Cecily Clark (Cambridge). Subsequently Richard Smith (Oxford) discussed forenaming during the later Middle Ages, concentrating on differences related to gender, regional variation and the forenaming of servants.

The two sessions on Sunday brought the proceedings into a more modern era. In the first of these sessions, Jeremy Boulton (Cambridge) and Evelyn Lord (Manchester) considered the social processes behind perceived patterns of forenaming. The former discussed the persistence of the influence of spiritual kinship after the Reformation and its disintegration in the early seventeenth century; the latter suggested that, subsequently, the social

function of inheritance was a formative influence, by comparing social group and region. In the final session, Kevin Schurer (Cambridge) and Jack Langton (Oxford) produced some suggestive comments about the formation of regional identity, which might affect the distribution of names, the one concentrating on the border between Essex and Hertfordshire, the other on the hinterland of Vadstena in Sweden. Langton's paper was a veritable tour de force, a resounding note on which to end the proceedings.

Throughout, all the papers instigated undiluted and broad ranging discussion, which consumed almost as much time as the formal presentation of the papers; and this uninhibited exchange of ideas constituted the success of the symposium almost as much as the social evenings in the Piano Room at Beaumont Hall where a copious amount of wine was provided by the Marc Fitch Fund. The overwhelming memory will be of camaraderie and social intercourse, despite, and because of, the many divergent approaches and views. Profound feelings of gratitude must therefore be extended to all those who, through their encouragement, made the proceedings possible, especially to the Marc Fitch Fund (and in particular to Dr Fitch himself, Roy Stephens, Richard Smith, and Christopher Elrington, who not only attended, but were all prime movers), to Ralph Weedon, to Sally Hall and her colleagues at Beaumont Hall who were so understanding, efficient, courteous and friendly despite continued unforeseen demands, and not least to all the participants who attended the symposium. Of those who not only came great distances - Gabriel Lasker, Bunny Kaplan, Dan Smith and Gillian Fellows-Jensen - but also contributed so highly, we will have fond memories. If one single word encapsulates the symposium, it was friendship.
David Postles

The First W.G. Hoskins Lecture: an Archaeologist's Perception

Christopher Taylor is the silver-haired Principal Investigator for the Royal Commission on Ancient and Historical Monuments and in several well-received books and many stimulating papers he has demonstrated that he is no grey man from the Ministry. This author first met Taylor in the autumn of 1982, when he gave a lively introduction to landscape archaeology before a group of enthralled undergraduates. They had just escaped from a series of lectures on the recent paradigms of archaeological thought. The author had barely understood the jargon of positivism, structuralism and Marxism; he had little understanding of the difference between a model, a hypothesis and a theory and the attempts to reconstruct past systems of thought in a framework of cognitive archaeology he regarded as faintly ridiculous. There and then he was 'won' for medieval landscape studies.

Taylor began his lecture on 'Medieval Settlement Patterns: Problems and Possibilities' appropriately by reviewing some of the work of W.G. Hoskins at different scales: Wigston Magna, Devon, the Highland Zone and the national study The Making of the English Landscape were all mentioned. Taylor then posed the question which has intrigued scholars since Hoskins's day and before: when did the Midland village begin?

There are four sets of methods which can be used to answer the question, and hence there are four sets of materials, each with their own particular problems. The first discipline analysed was history. Here Taylor identified the 'Henry II syndrome.' There are few documents before the late twelfth century and as Midland village origins are likely to lie before this period, written materials are not likely to be of much use. The detailed study of place-names was also dismissed as being of little value. The problem here was one of not knowing - other than in a very general way - when names originated or if they had changed in the lifetime of the settlement under review.

Taylor then turned to topographical studies which he regarded as 'splendid stuff'. Yet he argued that topography in itself did not provide dates; for these it relied on history and place-name studies and was thus beset with the problems he had already identified. Furthermore he argued that certain aspects of topography - notably studies of village morphology - were fundamentally flawed. Village shapes can change, he argued, and the most recent plan may bear no resemblance to the original. The examination of the north Devon landscape by one of W.G. Hoskins's successors - Harold Fox - was cited as one example of this change, as was Taylor's own research into his home settlement of Whittlesford, Cambridgeshire. Finally Taylor turned to 'the final arbiter': archaeology. This was dismissed as slow and extensive, and, as a result, expensive.

One general problem was then outlined: that of perception. This was considered to affect all approaches to medieval settlement research, but was thought to be particularly noticeable in archaeology. Here Taylor cited the example of Knaptoft, thought by Hoskins to be a deserted medieval village, but by others regarded as variously a quarry, a fishpond or a garden. The argument was widened to include present perceptions on patterns of nucleated and dispersed settlement. The present perception of nucleations, according to Taylor, is one which sees these settlements as of a late origin, perhaps late Saxon or eleventh or twelfth century in date. The more widespread patterns of dispersion are, he continued, usually interpreted as secondary settlement of poor land, 'late' place-names and documentary evidence being used to support this view. Taylor, however, argued that dispersal ought to be seen as 'normal' as it was the main characteristic of the landscape up to the early medieval period and beyond. The earlier views of many scholars, including Hoskins's on the pre-Saxon and perhaps prehistoric origins of settlement in the Celtic West, were nevertheless too simplistic. If this was the case, Taylor contended, why had the excavations at Roadford in Devon produced nothing for the period before the twelfth

century? It is possible, he continued, that dispersed settlements, like nucleations, are mobile.

In conclusion Taylor turned to the problem of how medieval settlement patterns ought to be studied. If mobility and dispersal are normal then determinism is no longer a valid approach. It is 'an obsession' which is no longer appropriate. Taylor concluded that there is now more need to study people - as owners and tenants, as producers and consumers and as the makers and breakers of settlements - and that individuals not geology should govern how we ought to perceive village origins.

As the audience departed for an excellent tea at Marc Fitch House, this author mused on how much had changed. He had escaped from the jargon-ridden, largely irrelevant and wholly impractical fringes of archaeology into medieval landscape studies, an area which Taylor had made understandable, exciting and worth pursuing. Now he was being sent back. Perhaps he had not escaped; only perceived that he had done so.
Jonathan Kissock

New Part-time M.A. Course

Newsletter no. 2 mentioned the planning which had taken place during 1989 for the new part-time M.A. course, 'English Local History: Societies, Cultures and Nation' commencing in October 1989 (and every October thereafter) and running parallel with the full-time course. It takes two years to complete, is available on Monday mornings or Thursday evenings, and may therefore be followed by people in employment or semi-employment. The idea has been a great success, with over twenty students studying on the course in October 1990, among them several recent graduates (one from the University of Leicester, one from De La Salle College), several people in retirement, and others from the teaching profession, from museums services, social services and other local government departments; publishing, the antique trade and librarianship are also represented. We hope that readers of the Newsletter will help to advertize this new development which is bringing the academic study of local history at Leicester to a wider range of students than ever before. Full details of both full-time and part-time courses are available from Mrs Pauline Whitmore at the Department's address.

ESF and INSET

As we go to press two exciting new developments are being actively planned in the Department. First, we are responding to a request from the School of Archaeological Studies to contribute to a new postgraduate Diploma in Landscape Studies for students funded by the ESF (European Social Fund). The diploma will have about five elements: one contributed by the Department, entitled 'Early medieval landscapes: English comparative studies', three contributed by Archaeology and a tail-piece involving practical work in Italy. The Diploma will run from November 1990; up to eight places may be competed for by applicants under the age of 25 from any EEC country.

Second, a Midlands approach to the core curriculum is an attractive new departure by the Department in collaboration with the LEA and the School of Education, as an accredited INSET (in-service training for teachers) module. Designed specifically for teachers of children aged 5-16 in local schools the course will concentrate on evidence from Leicestershire and adjacent counties. The course begins in mid-October 1990 and will probably be repeated in October 1991 and thereafter. We anticipate that publicity for 1991-2 will be disseminated in February. The content of the course is spread over the Autumn and Spring terms, covering approaches to the interpretation of the landscape since prehistory in the first term and the study of society and special groups since 1500 in the second. If you are interested: find out about INSET funding from your devolved school budget; contact the University's INSET office for further details and registration (Leicester 523660); discuss the content with David Postles (522766).

Departmental Seminar Programme 1989-90: Autumn Term

In studies of agricultural specialization it is easy to assume that a region well supplied with grass would have been pastoral, specializing in breeding or dairying, while a mainly arable area would be more labour-intensive and would specialize in corn crops. In his seminar on 'Intensive pastoral husbandry in medieval England: some evidence from Norfolk', Bruce Campbell (Queen's University of Belfast) found that in the early Middle Ages that county had a very low proportion of grass ground and that the labour-intensive cultivation of the arable already made greater use of horses than of oxen. Apart from the horses, however, the main cattle kept were not sheep but beasts; for this was, surprisingly, an intensive pastoral economy, concentrating on dairy production. His researches had started from post mortem inquisitions and demesne accounts and concentrated on crops until he realized the importance of the livestock. He was able to make use of the national sample of records collected by John Langdon to set his cluster analysis in a wider context. This Norfolk pattern spread to adjoining counties and only declined in the later Middle Ages when faced by competition from more extensive pastoral farming in other regions. His opening quotation was Chaucer's list of the livestock of the Reeve of Bordeswell, which turns out not to have been a mere literary illustration but typical of the region.

Adrian Wilson (Urban History Centre at this University) offered his theory that childbirth, before it became a medical event, had been a women's ceremony. In his 'Readings of ritual: the ceremony of childbirth in early-modern England' he gave an account of the details of lying-in, including the preparation of the chamber and the summoning of friends and neighbours ('gossips') and the importance of the midwife (or 'grace wife'). His evidence suggesting attitudes was mainly negative, in

that the churching of women, which marked the end of the whole ceremony, was opposed by Puritans, the men wishing to suppress it but the women, while mocking some of its details, wishing it to continue. Afterwards he was reprimanded for his historical method of starting with a thesis and fitting any scraps of evidence to it. His exposition was so clear, however, that everyone in the room felt free to contribute their points of view to the discussion.

John Blair (Queen's College, Oxford) has been engaged in wide-ranging research into Bampton in Oxfordshire, which has enabled him to add much to our understanding of the role of minsters as primary centres in the development of ecclesiastical territories and the staffing of local churches. In his presentation on 'Bampton, Oxfordshire: a minster church and its territory' he drew on many kinds of evidence, from church architecture and the alignment of holy sites in the parish, resistivity and contour surveys of the churchyard and a reinterpretation of Anthony Wood's drawing of Bampton Castle, which shows it to have been of gigantic proportions. The church's special role had a direct effect on the layout of the settlement. Within the church area there were three vicarages and fifty cottages, forming a 'town within a town'. He also pointed to the importance of minsters as early market centres; this was the only Oxfordshire place to have a market mentioned in Domesday.

In studying surviving peasantry in England in the nineteenth century Michael Reed (University of Sussex) has been confronted with the fact that many small producers and dealers do not after all appear to have been involved in regular market relations. In his 'Gnawing it out: neighbourhood exchange in nineteenth-century S.E. England', he found that accounts were settled by combinations of goods, cash, work, services or loans. Cash settlement was usually with people either outside the area or outside this band of household producers. Otherwise settlement tended to be at regular social occasions but was often left unconcluded for years. Initially he thought of this as a curiosity but has now come to think of it as of great importance. It also calls into doubt the general relevance of the sort of retail price index that has been constructed for earlier centuries.

If any unbelievers remain as to whether medieval Glastonbury can have been an urban community, they must be deaf to the persuasions of Lynn Marston (of this Department), whose 'Medieval Glastonbury: a town or not a town?' brought the first term's programme to a close. She was able to demonstrate that the shape of the town was initially defined by the ecclesiastical activity centred on the Abbey and by the commercial activity in the market place, which was later expanded through remodelling. Most of the early references to Glastonbury mention only the Abbey; but Domesday Book lists ten smiths and important merchants feature in the later history of the town. She ran through the various characteristics that have been proposed to judge the urban nature of a medieval community. One of the most persuasive pieces of evidence was her table of occupations given for Somerset boroughs in the 1327 Lay Subsidy.

John Goodacre

Departmental Seminar Programme 1989-90: Spring Term

Dr Philip Morgan (Dept of Adult and Continuing Education, University of Keele) commenced the second term's programme with the unusual topic of 'Lineage myths and the education of the English gentry'. Little attention has so far been paid to this important cultural element in the formation of the gentry and Dr Morgan therefore set out to redress the balance. Every county history affords examples of lineage histories, or narratives in prose and verse which involved the writing down of oral tradition long after the event. Many of them were written during the seventeenth century and most embody an origin myth, for like the nobility, the gentry sought to be exclusive and therefore tried to claim an elite ancestral pedigree. The proclamation of such lineage through various media in parish churches and chapels served to educate social equals and inferiors. The happy marriage of very detailed history and a considerable amount romance has led to frequent dismissal of these stories by historians but Philip Morgan outlined how lineage myths provide a link between the literature of medieval England and the local societies which produced them.

Dr Anne Mitson (School of Continuing Education, University of Hull) set out to show the importance and operation of kinship networks in south-west Nottinghamshire during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Reconstitution studies making use of documents such as parish registers, wills, estate papers and Exchequer papers were found to be a good starting point for measuring the mobility and stability of parish populations. It was found that the majority did not stay in their parish of birth but the main interest was in those who did, 'the stayers' in a community. Within this minority the same group of surnames recurred frequently and many of the people concerned proved to be related. A very similar pattern occurred to some extent in all the chosen parishes, providing evidence of stability throughout the period. The evidence favoured the middle-ranking sections of the population and indeed these were found to be the longest 'stayers'. Many of these people had considerable influence in a parish or neighbourhood area, often holding parochial office and having access to a wide network of kin.

An altogether different topic was presented by Professor Nicholas Brooks, F.B.A. (School of History, University of Birmingham) who looked at 'Rochester: bridge, city and territory over 2000 years'. A tenth-century document reveals how the burden of repairing Rochester Bridge was laid on local communities within the lathe of Aylesford. Each group was responsible for setting in place three bridge beams and the details provided by the document makes it possible to reconstruct the bridge's structure. It is thought that the document refers to a Roman arched bridge which had partly collapsed by the tenth century. Professor Brooks felt

that the principle of important bridges being the responsibility of the whole shire at the time of Domesday was probably as ancient as the shire system itself. The bridge remained well documented until the construction of a new one in 1392. The estates supporting the original bridge continued their responsibility by the annual appointment of two bridge-wardens. A third bridge was erected in 1856 and until 1911 bridge-wardens continued to be elected thus providing a rare example of continuity.

'Men and women in work and unemployment in the 1920s and 30s' was the subject presented by Dr Sally Alexander (History Workshop Journal). This was a period which saw a decline in staple industries and the development of new light industries associated with new production processes and use of cheap female labour. It is the denigration of this new work force which particularly interested Dr Alexander. Through the study of autobiographies and interviews with working men and women, largely from East London, she tried to examine their own understanding of their work and employment and their notion of sexual difference.

Finally Mr Michael Nix (Bodmin, Bude and Launceston Museums) turned our attention to the West Country with his study of 'Merchants, masters, and men: the shipowning industry of north Devon 1786-1841'. Using sources such as a Barnstaple quay-master's account book and the Bideford ship register, it was possible to throw considerable light on the changes brought about by the French Revolutionary War on the main north Devon ports. Members of the merchant and gentry classes were the chief shareholders amongst the shipowners and a close kinship network was found to exist between them. Heavy investment was made in local shipbuilding in the hopes of making large profits from the increased freight rates in time of war. The number and tonnage of Bideford ships rose accordingly. Vessels of a much heavier rig were built and the carrying capacity was cleverly increased because it was not required to be officially measured. The majority of both merchants, masters and men were found to come from north Devon and a large number of these from Appledore. Interestingly a very high percentage of Appledore's population was apparently made up of shipowners and mariners, each group living in its own separate enclave among the narrow, compact streets. Those of us who went on this year's field course to Devon were able to see evidence of this for ourselves.

Maureen Shettle

Second Research Students' Workshop

On 18th June, thanks to the hard work and organisation of Lynn Marston, a rare gathering of part-time research students was seen in the vicinity of Marc Fitch House. Having made excuses to employers, evaded spouses and 'dumped' children at various points around the country we came together in the seminar room for our own series of papers. Indicative of the problems faced by all part-timers were the bulging files, chaotic scribblings, a nervous approach to anything that smacks of modern technology, and the very obvious fact that few of us knew each other. Nevertheless, the ability to tackle anything quickly surfaced and within minutes we were embarked on an entertaining, stimulating and rewarding day.

John Lovell began with a paper on Victorian Northampton, where he is trying to trace the development of Far Cotton from a hamlet of some sixteen households to a suburb of 4000 people in fifty years and to test the oral tradition which suggests that this rapid expansion was due in large part to the opening of the railway in 1845. After coffee Peter Scott embarked on his illustrated paper on railways and London suburbs. He suggested that far from being confined to the realms of early history place-name changes have relevance in a modern context. He demonstrated this with the case of Greenhill and its two railway stations - Harrow-on-the-Hill and Harrow and Wealdstone - which have resulted in Greenhill being misnamed Harrow. His more general concern is with how local people and railway companies perceive the limits of suburbs.

Jenny Bhatt, having dropped the children at school, continued the proceedings with a study of marriage bars to women's careers during the early decades of the twentieth century. Her research was stimulated by a box of letters that came into her possession detailing the fight of Dr Margaret Miller to retain her post as a lecturer at Liverpool University after her marriage in 1932. Her investigation raises many issues on the changing attitudes to women in the home and in employment during this period. 'An easy option' was how Madge Brown described her research on parliamentary enclosure in Nottinghamshire. However, she soon dispelled this myth by pointing out that nobody had tackled the subject since Tate. Madge has been rifling the newspapers of the period to search for evidence of opposition, of meetings, and perhaps of criminal damage associated with enclosure acts.

Next was my turn: 'The class organisation of nineteenth-century dissent', said the programme. A brief guide was given to the history and geology of the Somerset coalfield to provide the context for the study of the role of dissent, in this case Methodism, in the lives of local communities. It is surprising how quickly time goes by when you get to 'your subject' - the community of Coleford, its reconstruction between 1890 and 1926 and the role of religion compared with that of other village institutions and social groups.

Lunch-time provided a respite, thanks again to Lynn who had been hard at work as early as 8.30 a.m. Conversation turned to the myriad of issues arising from the morning session, the vagaries of record offices and innumerable day-to-day problems we all face in juggling jobs, homes, families and research. The afternoon session abandoned the nineteenth century in favour of boundaries and dedications. Graham Jones began in Turkey, groping in a tomb for a religious relic, but came back to England for his serious study of church dedications. Through the wording and format of wills he hopes to

make a study of the way in which dedications are used to make sense of the lives of the people. He is concentrating on dedications to the cult of St Helen in the medieval diocese of Worcester, and their local concentrations. His own 'dedication' was clearly illustrated with a handy map of the distribution of St Helen and St Constantine, which he had constructed in Greece while his wife and daughter soaked up the sun!

Anne Barker, working under the description of 'Medieval settlement in Essex', suggested that 'landscape history' would probably be a more accurate title. Devouring a packet of Tunes, she led us back through the Roman fields of Dengie Hundred, its wood, marsh and felden pays, before concentrating on the parish of Asheldham and its indistinct, late, western boundary. This prompted an interesting discussion on shared common land between three parishes, and speculation that the three may once have been a single unit. Why these three parishes should all have churches dedicated to St Lawrence remained a mystery.

Terry Finnemore admitted to being in the throes of 'writing-up', immediately impressing most of the rest of us who still have a long way to go before our theses are complete. His research has taken him through over 300 boundary descriptions in three of Staffordshire's hundreds, tracing their evolution, the way in which successive boundaries interlock, and their stability. He concluded that the accessibility of parish boundaries has given them unwarranted pre-eminence and he raised the question 'Why did parishioners beat the bounds?'

Finally, and with time rapidly running out, Ralph Weedon discussed the problems facing his study of the early settlement of Lancashire: the shortage of documents, the level of expertise required in some research strategies and thus difficulties in establishing parameters for the study.

The general consensus on the day was highly favourable. We shared problems and solutions, we stimulated our thinking and we were assured that there are people out there interested in our labours. Another research students' workshop is planned for the autumn (see below under 'Future Events').
Julie Dexter

FUTURE EVENTS IN THE DEPARTMENT

Seminar Programme 1990-91

If you would like to come to any of the following seminars you will be very welcome. They are held at Marc Fitch House, 5 Salisbury Road. It is essential that you notify the Departmental Secretary (Mrs Pauline Whitmore, Leicester 522762) **the day before**, as there may well be limits on the number of spaces for some of these seminars. The final seminar is an **addition** to the programme already circulated.

11 October 1990. Twentieth-century farm servants in East Yorkshire: the evolution of a traditional occupational structure (Dr Stephen Caunce, Department of Business and Economic Studies, University of Leeds).
1 November 1990. Woodland and its origin in the medieval forest of Shotover, Oxfordshire (Dr Petra Day, Department of Plant Sciences, University of Oxford).
8 November 1990. Evidence for early dialect distributions (Mr Peter Kitson, School of English, University of Birmingham).
22 November 1990. Changing roles for the suburban market town of Romford, Essex, 1460-1620 (Dr Marjorie McIntosh, University of Colorado at Boulder).
6 December 1990. 'As I was going to St Ives...' - an urban society and its hinterland in early modern England (Dr Mary Carter).
10 January 1991. Church and diocese in the West Midlands: the transition from British to Anglo-Saxon control (Dr Stephen Bassett, School of History, University of Birmingham).
17 January 1991. Symbolic action in seventeenth-century England (Dr David Cressy, Department of History, California State University).
31 January 1991. 'For better, for worse': marriage and economic opportunity for women in town and country in the later Middle Ages (Dr Jeremy Goldberg, Department of History, University of York).
28 February 1991. Dialect study in the Sheffield area, 1790-1990 (Professor John Widdowson, the Centre for English Cultural Tradition and Language, University of Sheffield).
7 March 1991. South-east England from 1000 A.D.: theoretical perspectives on the development of intra-regional differences (Dr Brian Short, School of Cultural and Community Studies, University of Sussex).

Annual Conference of the Council for Name Studies

Each year this conference brings together some of the most distinguished scholars researching into place-names and personal names in the British Isles, and, in recent years, has also invited scholars from other countries. The conference usually attracts about 50 participants. The next meeting will be convened in Leicester between the 5th and the 8th of April 1991 and is being arranged jointly by the Council for Name Studies and the Department of English Local History. The formal sessions will take place in Beaumont Hall of Residence and there will be a reception in Marc Fitch House as well as an afternoon's excursion. Although nine papers are planned, the full programme has not yet been arranged. Those who have provisionally accepted invitations to speak include Gillian Fellows-Jensen, Peter Kitson, Cecily Clark, Ann Dornier, Margery Tranter, Mary Higham and Peter Warner. If you are interested in attending please contact Richard McKinley or David Postles at the Department.

Fourth Anglo-American Seminar on the Medieval Economy and Society

Since 1983 Dr Bruce Campbell of the Queen's University of Belfast has been organising an

Anglo-American seminar on 'The Medieval Economy and Society'. Meetings have been held at Exeter, Norwich and Chester. We are delighted to announce that the 1992 meeting (July 17th to 19th) will be convened at Leicester, in collaboration with the Department of English Local History. These meetings are a 'must' for all who work on medieval economic and social history and always attract a large contingent of North American scholars.

Second W.G. Hoskins Lecture

Following the success of the first W.G. Hoskins Lecture (see above under 'Events in the Department') we are pleased to announce that the second lecture will be given by Dr David Hey, Reader in Local History at the Division of Continuing Education of the University of Sheffield. The date is Saturday 4th May, 1991 and the subject will be 'Family history and local history' (provisional title). David Hey worked under W.G. Hoskins in the Department and assisted him in the revision of Local History in England (third edition, 1984). His Ph.D. thesis yielded An English Rural Community: Myddle under the Tudors and Stuarts (1974) and his tenure of a Research Fellowship in the Department gave us the Occasional Paper, The Rural Metalworkers of the Sheffield Region (1972). A prolific and popular author on the North of England, his books on that subject include Packmen, Carriers and Packhorse Roads (1980), The Making of South Yorkshire (1979), Yorkshire from AD 1000 (1986) and The Fiery Blades of Hallamshire (to be published by Leicester University Press in 1991). His latest book is Family History and Local History in England (1987), the subject of his lecture on May 4th. Nearer the date Friends will be notified about the time and place of the lecture which will be followed by home-made teas in Marc Fitch House, and a booksale. Please do add this date to your diary now and come along to help make the get-together after the second W.G. Hoskins Lecture as successful as that after the first.

Research Students' Workshop

Lynn Marston has kindly agreed to convene another workshop at Marc Fitch House in late February or early March. All research students will be notified nearer the date.

FUNDED RESEARCH IN THE DEPARTMENT

In the last issue of the Newsletter we gave reports of research being carried out in the Department thanks to three major grants amounting to a total of over £50,000 (to Harold Fox, from the E.S.R.C. for research into medieval Taunton; to Keith Snell, from the British Academy, for a bibliography of the regional novel; to Margery Tranter, from the Leverhulme Trust, for work on the origin of boundaries in southern Derbyshire). This year we are able to announce another major grant, of nearly £50,000, to Keith Snell for a study of the local geography of religious pluralism in England and Wales. The grant will not commence until January and is reported on only briefly here; a longer report will appear in Newsletter no.4. These grants come, of course, on top of continuing major funding of the English Surnames Survey which has been surported in the Department by the Marc Fitch Fund since 1965. A report on the work of the survey is given below.

Local Geography of Religion in England and Wales

The research associate, yet to be appointed, will be working on local variations in religious pluralism in both England and Wales, between circa 1676 and 1851. The project will allow extension and elaboration of research on this theme which has been carried out in the Department by Alan Everitt, Margery Tranter, Keith Snell, Paul Ell and Julie Dexter. The project will involve detailed quantitative and computerized work on such sources as the Compton Census of 1676, the Evans list of 1715, visitation returns, the religious returns of 1829 and the 1851 census of religious worship. This initiative will result in considerable methodological innovation, a closer understanding of the local history of religious pluralism and a better appreciation of the cultural regions of England and Wales.

Keith Snell

The English Surnames Survey

Located since its inception within the Department of English Local History, the English Surnames Survey has had as its principal objective research into the development of bynames and surnames in England. En passant, it has also been and is increasingly concerned to bring together research in many other disciplines which concern themselves with naming patterns: by bio-anthropologists, historical demographers, cultural anthropologists, historical geographers and social historians.

The Survey was established in 1965 under the Directorship of Richard Mckinley, the initial Marc Fitch Research Fellow. Since his retirement in 1986, two successive Research Fellows have held the post, whilst Richard continues as Honorary Research Fellow, providing invaluble advice. Throughout its history, the Survey has been funded by the Marc Fitch Fund. With costs for research and equipment in addition to a large part of the fellow's salary, the Fund has invested a substantial amount in the Survey, and, consequently, in the Department and the University. The Fund also underwrites the costs of publishing the research monographs produced by the Survey. Moreover, the Fund has recently financed an inter-disciplinary symposium (see the report in this issue).

The results of this research have been encapsulated in five substantial volumes in the English Surnames Series, four by Richard McKinley and one by his former research student, George Redmond. This published work encompasses the surnames of Norfolk and Suffolk, the West Riding

of Yorkshire, Oxfordshire, Lancashire and, most recently, Sussex. Research is currently in progress on Devon, and the results will be published imminently. The forward programme will include Leicestershire cum Rutland and then Cumberland. By this comparative method, the Survey assesses regional variations in naming patterns (although, admittedly, counties are not regions per se). Some of the important conclusions of the research may be inferred from the county volumes which have already appeared: for example, differences by region and social group in the adoption of hereditary surnames; cultural diffusion of naming patterns; the persistence of a substratum of surnames within localised societies from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries; some regional differences in the proportion of forms of bynames and surnames in the Middle Ages, and similar differences, to some extent, between social groups.

The Survey is thus in its 25th year, through the financial support of the Fund and personal interest and encouragement from individual members of its Council of Management and from three Heads of the Department. Whilst a few other anthroponomists, such as the distinguished Cecily Clark, are working in this field, no other organisation assumes such a detailed research programme. In the future, however, the Survey's additional role may well be to encourage inter-disciplinary work and to coordinate research, without impeding the work of other bodies such as the Council for Name Studies.

David Postles

STAFF CHANGES

Professor Nobuyoshi Shinotsuka

The Department extends a very warm welcome to Professor 'Nobu' Shinotsuka, our fifth Visiting Fellow from Japan. Nobu obtained both his bachelor's and his master's degrees from Tokyo University and since 1974 has been Professor of the Economic History of Western Europe at Tohoku University. He has published widely on many aspects of economic history, from the thirteenth century to the seventeenth and is joint editor of Genten Igirisu Keizaishi (2nd edn, 1972), a difficult translation of English economic documents (some originally in Latin) into the Japanese. Like his predecessors in the Department he has come to Leicester to be closer to his source materials and to make use of the University's rich collections in English Local History. His particular interest at present is the genesis of industrial by-employments in the West Riding of Yorkshire, a study which has already taken him to record repositories in Leeds. And, not to be daunted, he has just returned with his wife and family from a long trip to several western European countries.

Dr Chris Thornton

Chris Thornton leaves the Department in October for a well-deserved Junior Research Fellowship at Hertford College, Oxford. Incredibly - so quickly have the years passed - he has been with us for seven years, first as the holder of the Rimpton Scholarship (established in the Department by the Willam Gibbs Trust and the late Lord Aldenham) then, after a period when he was closely connected with the Social Services Department, as E.S.R.C. Research Associate working with Harold Fox on the Taunton Project (see Newsletter no. 2). Chris has helped to enhance the Department's reputation in medieval rural studies at the levels of both research and teaching and has been an integral part of the small band of researchers here who tackle aspects of Somerset local history. All of his friends send him warmest wishes for his new post and also for his marriage to Lynn Marston, deftly timed to coincide with the first day of the Department's term.

Mr Tony Thomson

Through the good offices of Professor Michael Reed of the Department of Library and Information Studies at Loughborough University, the Marc Fitch Fund Library has again been exceptionally lucky to have had the assistance of a trainee librarian in order to help with cataloguing. Tony joined us for the summer and has pushed forward the task of compiling a catalogue of high professional standard. As a mature student (and ex-airman) he studied at Middlesex Polytechnic before going on to Loughborough. Tony's dedication is shown by the fact that the copying of duplicate cards has been carried out partly in his spare time; users of the Library will never guess that some of them were copied in a caravan while he and his wife were on holiday in Devon. We thank him most warmly and wish him every success in his future career.

Mr Ted Fisher

When the Department moved to Marc Fitch House in November 1988 we were exceptionally lucky to be given the services of Ted Fisher, seconded from the School of Education. After several weeks of coping with resident carpenters and painters, he soon settled down to ensure that the House retained its ship-shape appearance. This goes without saying, for Ted spent a good many years in the Merchant Navy. But more than this: our lives were transformed in all kinds of small ways. Beautifully made cakes arrived on office desks from Ted's kitchen; cuttings from his greenhouse were made to thrive all over the House; his third hobby, dancing, was manifested daily as he glided from room to room to the tune of one of his favourite melodies. He left us in April, despite our protests, as a result of the University's policy of retiring all staff at the age of sixty-five. We wish him and his wife Joyce many years of happy retirement.

We are equally lucky in our new Housekeeper, Mrs Christine Fairbrother, who maintains the very high standards of her predecessor.

MARC FITCH HOUSE AND ITS FACILITIES

In Newsletter no.2 Martin Cherry described the urban-historical context of Marc Fitch House. We announced that this issue would contain his professional evaluation of the architecture of the House itself, but that has been postponed because Martin has been unable to unearth the building plans at the Leicestershire Record Office: plans for other houses in Salisbury Road exist, but those for numbers 5 and 3 have mysteriously disappered from the sequence. Instead, we include two exceptionally interesting features on one of the amenities of the house, the collection of family portraits. The first is by Shearer West, of the Department of the History of Art, and an expert on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century portraiture, the other by Chris Sturman who is researching the life of Charles Tennyson, brother of the Poet Laureate and cousin to the subject of one of the portraits. The Marc Fitch Fund Library is represented in this issue by the announcement of a major gift of offprints and books. Future issues will contain pieces on particular aspects of the Library, for example its atlases and rare maps. The cover of this issue gives a foretaste, being the title page of the atlas of the County of Essex (1777), one of the finest items in the collection.

The Portraits and their Artists

Marc Fitch House contains four fascinating portraits of members of the Fitch family, by Michael Dahl (?1659-1743), Thomas Hudson (1709-79) and George Richmond (1809-96). Dahl was a Swedish artist, who first came to England in the 1680s, and finally settled here, becoming Godfrey Kneller's biggest rival. His portraits of Lady Anne Fytch (1650-1700) and her husband Sir Thomas Fytch (1637-88) may have been painted as pendants although they illustrate the very different way he represented men and women. Lady Anne Fytch belongs to a fashion of depicting court 'beauties' initiated by Peter Lely in the 1660s. Dahl himself painted a group of beauties for the Duke of Somerset at Petworth, and also followed Lely in using a series of standard poses, varied slightly; the pose of Lady Anne Fytch is based on Lely's Anne Digby, Countess of Sutherland at Althorp House. The slightly stiff draperies may have been the work of studio assistants, who were commonly deputed to finish such subsidiary areas. Also characteristic of Dahl were the accessory flowers (possibly alluding to the subject's marriage in 1675), and dramatic chiaroscuro, which differs from Lely's more even treatment of light.

Dahl was recognized for his ability to delineate the subleties of physiognomy, and his compelling portrait of Sir Thomas Fytch reveals this skill. Like many painters of the late seventeenth century, he tended to invest more character in male portraits than in female ones, and Sir Thomas Fytch is in marked contrast to the stereotyped image of his wife. The painting may have been executed in 1688, the beginning of the period when Dahl was settling in London, but the very end of Thomas Fytch's relatively short life. Fytch was a building contractor who worked with Christopher Wren on rebuilding London after the Great Fire. In 1688 he was constructing a new storehouse in the Tower of London.

Thomas Hudson is best known as the master of Joshua Reynolds, but before Reynold's ascendancy Hudson was one of the most popular portrait painters in London. Horace Walpole pointed out that Hudson was preferred by country gentlemen 'content with his honest similitudes', as he struck a balance between flattery of the sitters and restraint of pose. These qualities are apparent in Hudson's portrait of the Essex squire, Thomas Ffytche and his niece, Elizabeth, who stare out at the observer, while their bodies are turned away in the 'unaggressive' posing for which Hudson was known. The relationship between uncle and niece is an unusual one for a double portrait; here it represents Thomas Ffytche's role as surrogate father after the death of Elizabeth's own father William Ffytche, formerly governor of Bengal. The date given, 1758, may be slightly too late. The painting shows Hudson at the height of his powers; by 1758 he was in semi-retirement and painting little. The sheen on Elizabeth's dress is characteristic of Alexander Van Aken, Hudson's drapery painter, who died in 1757.

The final painting in the collection represents Lt.-General Albert Fytche (1819-92) by George Richmond. Richmond is best known today for his youthful involvement with Samuel Palmer and the 'Ancients' at Shoreham in Kent, but after only a brief period with this group he became a fashionable portrait painter. The date given for his portrait of Albert Fytche as an ensign (circa 1838) may be slightly incorrect, as Richmond was working in Italy at this time. The portrait was painted for Fytche's mother just before he left the country for a long assignment in Burma (for which see the piece by Chris Sturman below).

Shearer West

The People in the Portraits: Lt.-General Albert Fytche

Friends of the Department may be interested to know something of Lt.-General Albert Fytche whose portrait as a young East India Company ensign hangs on the first-floor landing of Marc Fitch House, and in particular of the reference to the painting in an uncollected poem by his cousin Charles Tennyson (1808-79). Albert was the third son of John and Anne Fytche of Louth, Lincolnshire; his father's sister, Elizabeth Fytche, married the Rev. George Tennyson in 1805. From 1826 he was a pupil at Louth Grammar School, whence in 1836 he entered the East India Company's Addiscombe College at Croydon.

He sailed for India in 1839 and his subsequent career in Burma was one of considerable distinction. In 1840 he became Lieutenant in the Bengal Staff Corps, and was successively promoted Captain, Major, Lt-Colonel, Colonel and, in 1868, Lt.-General. In 1846 he was appointed Deputy Commissioner of the Sandoway district; he was Deputy Commissioner of Bassein in 1852 and Commissioner of Tenasserim in 1857. He became Chief Commissioner of Burma in March 1867, administering the province until his retirement in 1871.

The major source for the student of Albert's life is his two-volume Burmah Past and Present (1878) which he dedicated to his cousin Alfred Tennyson, then Poet Laureate. In it he prints a poem 'On the departure of Albert Fytche to India by the ship Marquis Camden', which Alfred's elder brother Charles addressed to Mrs Fytche on 9 March 1839. The poem, which does not appear in Charles's collected works, is unfortunately not one of his more inspired pieces, but does deserve some wider currency, not least because it alludes to the portrait of his cousin.

To India's bright and sunny skies
The youngest of the house hath gone;
His belt and scarlet garb is on,
And laurels he hath not yet won
Are blooming in his mother's eyes.

But will she quit him thus? Confide
In records of her thoughts alone
To feed her yearning upon?
No livelier trace of her sweet son,
The high in heart, the hazel-eyed.

Nay - though than mother's memory
There cannot be a stronger light,
And though it bides for ever bright,
And sees with a delightful sight
Her absent darling on the sea,

Yet painting is a wizard power,
And 'ere the billows washed his prow,
She put in force her tender vow
To trust him with those eyes, that brow,
And then she better brooked the parting hour.

There remains a puzzle about the portrait, said to be by George Richmond (1809-96), which future research might help to resolve. It is not listed in the catalogue of Richmond's portraits in Raymond Lister's George Richmond: A Critical Biography (1981). Moreover, Richmond left England in October 1837, returning in September 1839. If it is by Richmond then it must either be of 1837 or a later copy; if it was painted shortly before Albert's departure for India, it must be by another artist.
Chris Sturman

Gift of Offprints and Books on Deserted Medieval Villages

The Department has been exceptionally lucky in having been chosen as the recipient of a long-term loan of an important collection of foreign offprints and books on deserted medieval villages which, over the years, have been presented to John Hurst and Maurice Beresford, co-founders of the Deserted Medieval Village Research Group (now Medieval Settlement Research Group). As the importance of the site at Wharram Percy, dug by Beresford and Hurst since 1952, came to be recognized nationally and internationally it was natural that writers of papers and books on cognate subjects should send presentation copies to these two pioneers. Now that the excavation is being wound up, and with the retirement of John Hurst as Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments, it was decided that this collection - European-wide in its coverage - should be placed in a location outside London where it could easily be consulted by any interested party. The Library at Marc Fitch House seemed the obvious choice, and the collection will arrive at some time during the academic year 1990-91. It may be used during normal Library Hours by appointment made through Pauline Whitmore.

DEPARTMENTAL PUBLICATIONS

H.S.A. Fox

'Peasant farmers, patterns of settlement and pays: transformations in the landscapes of Devon and Cornwall during the Later Middle Ages', in R. Higham (ed.), Landscape and Townscape in the South West (University of Exeter, Studies in History 22, 1989), pp. 41-73.

This paper is based on work carried out for The Agrarian History of England and Wales, 1349-1500 (forthcoming 1991). It makes the contention that, notwithstanding the antiquity of their basic bone-structures, and some important later changes, the landscapes of Devon and Cornwall owe a great detail to transformations taking place during the Later Middle Ages. In the conviction that there can be no landscape history as a respectable subject unless we write as much about people as about the cultural landscapes which they created, it begins by examining certain experiences of the rural populations of the two counties during this period. In the century and a half after the Black Death numbers of people dwindled and holdings were amalgamated; farmers had more choice in the tenures which they elected to farm; there were important changes, too, in labouring life, including some fall in the number of independent cottagers. Decline in rural populations, amalgamation of holdings, decay of cottages - all of these had profound effects on patterns of settlement, to produce those lonely south-western landscapes, with widely spaced

isolated farms, which we see in the landscape today. The paper gives especial attention to the effects of declining population on patterns of settlements and fields: one section deals in depth with desertion and contraction of farms and hamlets on the Devon manor of Hartland and the Cornish manor of Helston-in-Kirrier and with enclosure of open fields - a process much facilitated by amalgamation of farms and therefore of strips. A final section examines the place of the Later Middle Ages in the emergence of specialist farming regions. It makes the point that rising standards of living (with reduced population), the trend away from subsistence farming and, in the South-West, a buoyant industrial sector were all likely to have resulted in nascent specializations during this period. Evidence for such specializations is presented in the form of maps of crop combinations and of movement of cattle between regions.

J.D. Harrison
The Bridgewater Railway (Oakwood Press, 1990), 96pp.

This small illustrated book celebrates the centenary of a seven-mile railway built to connect Bridgewater with the Somerset and Dorset Railway. As with other lines that were late to open, it was among the first to be axed, closing in the early 1950s some time before Dr Beeching demolished so many country branch lines.

Much of the narrative deals with the motives behind the building of this local line; the ambitions and rivalries, political intrigue and economic realities. Although there was a local flavour in the promotion of the Bridgewater Railway, studies of branch lines should be set in the wider perspective of regional and national networks. In Bridgewater's case connection with the Bristol and Exeter Railway (later Great Western) gave rise to a monopolistic situation that caused discontent among the town's merchants. Unable to raise sufficient capital in Bridgewater or to persuade a rival railway company to build the line, a relatively small social group campaigned to gain moral and financial support to bring an alternative route to the industrial north, the metropolis and the south coast.

Once it was opened the line never fulfilled the roseate anticipations that some had hoped for. Even in the 1890s there was some rationalization of the services. The first decade of the twentieth century witnessed an abortive attempt to connect the Bridgewater Railway with rural communities situated between the Parrett and the Quantocks via a Light Railway Order. World War I stimulated extra traffic but the railway grouping of 1923 combined with the exceedingly small traffic on a local rural line in a time of economic depression soon had the accountants looking for economies and closure.

This is a book for the aficionado in his armchair rather than the academic in his study, but there are some trains of thought in which the two may be discerned sharing the same compartment.

J.A. Kissock
'Gower farms and field systems', Archaeology in Wales 29 (1989), pp.34-5 (with R.N. Cooper).

R.A. McKinley
A History of British Surnames (Longmans, 1990), viii + 230pp.

This book is intended to provide a general guide to the history and evolution of hereditary surnames in Britain for people without any specialised knowledge of the subject, and in particular to enable amateur students of family history and genealogy to set into a general context facts discovered about individual families or surnames. It is based on original research into surnames carried out over a long period, but it is a popular rather than an academic work. The book covers England, Wales and Scotland, but not the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands or any part of Ireland.

It traces the rise of hereditary surnames in Britain, discussing the variations to be found between different regions and between different social classes. Scotland and Wales each have their own distinctive histories where the development of surnames is concerned, and these are considered separately. The social, legal and administrative factors which led to the gradual adoption of hereditary surnames, a process spread over a long period, are also discussed. Each of the main categories of surnames is considered in turn: those derived from place-names, from topographical terms, from ranks and occupations, from first names, from relationships and from nicknames. There were marked differences between regions in the nature of the surnames present, and some of these differences persist in a modified way to the present time. Although no attempt has been made to provide a dictionary of surnames, the origin and etymology of many names are given in this book.

Other sections include a chapter on further reading, which directs attention to the main reference works on the subject, including the main dictionaries of surnames. The chief object of the chapter is to give guidance to readers wishing to investigate the meaning and origin of their own names. A further chapter deals with some general themes in the history of surnames, such as how far people with a given surname are likely to share a common ancestry, the way in which surnames have migrated over the centuries from their points of origin, and the way in which the names of some families have greatly ramified and increased in numbers. There is also a chapter on the use of evidence from surnames to throw light on aspects of local history. A History of British Surnames is part of a series on 'Approaches to Local History' edited by Dr David Hey.

M. Nix

'Ship registration in North Devon', North Devon Heritage 2 (1990), pp.4-5.

The Registry Act of 1786 was universally applied to all British merchant vessels 'having a deck, or being of fifteen tons or upwards'. Documentation embraced the issuing of certificates of registration and their transcription into large buckrum-bound volumes. Details included information about the vessels themselves and their owners and masters. The port of Bideford was among the earliest in the country to begin registration. Some shipowners soon lost their certificates - to sail into a British port without one could incur a fine of £100. One was mislaid in the post between Exeter and Barnstaple and the owner offered a £5 reward for its return while the master of the Pearl of Barnstaple pawned his. The registers themselves are invaluable for the student who wishes to assess the shipping stock of a port at a particular time or to investigate investment in ship-owning by members of the local community.

C.V. Phythian-Adams

'Rural culture', in G.E. Mingay (ed.), The Vanishing Countryman (Routledge, 1989), pp.76-86.

D.A. Postles

'Cleaning the medieval arable', Agricultural History Review 37 (1989), pp.130-143.

Discussion of the productivity of arable land during the Middle Ages has necessarily concentrated upon the margin and limits of technology. The suggestion, recently advanced by W. Harwood Long - that one of the principal determinants of low grain yields during the period was the limited attention given to cleaning the land - requires further empirical research. This is especially necessary since recent work on medieval arable productivity has emphasized that more intensive use of labour resources did, in some regions, result in higher output. For the purposes of this paper, surveys and account rolls were examined in order to ascertain the extent to which the cropland of medieval demesnes was cleaned. Weeding was certainly practised on most demesnes, and on some the evidence conclusively shows that all of the land under crops was cleaned in this way; to hoeing was added the practice of pulling out thistles and other noxious weeds by hand. But this was not all: cleanliness of cropland could be further enhanced by attempts to prevent weeds from proliferating during the fallow year, that is by giving the fallows an extra stirring during high summer. Again, there is good and occasionally detailed evidence for this practice, although it does appear that the proportion of the fallow so treated was usually rather small. The reason? - to weed all of the fallow would deprive livestock of feed, and what would be gained through cleanliness of the tilth would be lost again through shortage of manure. Much labour was therefore expended on demesnes in the attempt to eradicate weeds, yet yields in general remained low. The changes in technique which were to result in higher yields in the post-medieval centuries were an increase in and better use of livestock resources, intensive fertilization, intensive input of labour across all tasks, and convertible husbandry. Low medieval yields resulted from failure to adopt all of these practices; weediness was a contributory factor but not the sole determinant.

K.D.M. Snell

New edition of A. Somerville, The Whistler at the Plough: Containing Travels, Statistics and Descriptions of Scenes and Agricultural Customs in most parts of England (Merlin Press, 1989), 469pp.

Alexander Somerville was a remarkable man. Born in poverty in 1811, he was the eleventh child of parents who were Scottish farmworkers from the East Lothians. He achieved national fame in 1832, while serving in the Scots Greys - he wrote a letter to a national newspaper saying that his regiment should never be ordered to draw its swords against peaceful demonstrations of people wanting political reform, and he was ferociously flogged by the army for this. He was befriended by Cobbett, and became the centre of an official enquiry ordered by the King. After a time serving as a mercenary in Spain, he then became a rural commentator and reporter, discussing in a large number of newspaper articles the state of British farming and the rural population in the 1840s. He also reported on the Irish famine in 1847.

He wrote under the pseudonym 'The Whistler at the Plough', and this book republishes his hitherto almost inaccessible reports of the 1840s. Writing in favour of Corn Law repeal, and with a distinct sympathy for the rural poor, his prose style and close attention to rural detail deserve to rank with Cobbett's writings. He had an enormous amount to say about the rural standard of living, topography and farming systems, social relationships on the land, poaching, farm tenures and many other agricultural matters. His work is interspersed with lengthy and telling verbatim accounts of conversations with farm labourers, unique for its period. It will also be published soon in a shortened paperback edition, and a separate volume is planned for Somerville's reports on the Irish famine. His book, already hailed by reviewers as 'masterly', 'graphic' and 'remarkable', should soon rank alongside the classics of nineteenth-century rural life, and will be compulsive reading for anyone with interests in this field of study.

'Rural history and folklore studies: towards new forms of association', Folklore 100 (1989), pp.218-20.

Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture 1 (1990), 142pp. (ed. with L. Bellamy and T. Williamson).

For a long time now agricultural history has been rather narrowly defined, with a particular emphasis on economic history. This new journal, starting in April 1990, while dealing with agricultural economic and social history, will set out to widen the discipline into much more pervasive contact with cognate subjects, like folklore, archaeology and material culture, rural sociology, anthropology, landscape history, rural historical geography, art history, history and rural literature, women's studies, demography and the history of the family, museum studies and all other subjects dealing with 'matters rural'. The first number is a special issue on 'New Directions in Rural History', with a broad disciplinary spectrum of commissioned essays from scholars in such disciplines. Its editorial - 'Rural history: the prospect before us' - discusses the way in which the subject ought to evolve. The journal will cover predominantly the English-speaking world and Europe, although articles from further afield may be considered, especially if they have a strong comparative dimension. It will also publish on matters of current concern to the countryside with, for example, forthcoming articles on the decline of the Welsh language in rural Wales, or the Common Agricultural Policy. One hopes that it will capture the best work currently being undertaken on rural studies and rural history. It will also provide a forum for notes and queries, review essays, book reviews, and other materials designed to stimulate enquiry and debate. Notes for contributors may be obtained from Keith Snell at the Department.

There has already been enormous support for, and interest in, the journal from many hundreds of scholars, and it looks like being one of the most successful of Cambridge University Press's academic periodicals. Further details about subscriptions - £18 p.a. for two issues a year initially - may be obtained from Paula Johnson, Journals Department, Cambridge University Press, The Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 2RU.

'Rural history: the prospect before us', Rural History: Economy, Society, Culture 1 (1990), pp.1-4 (with L. Bellamy and T. Williamson).

'Dr George Fussell: following the plough without flapdoodle', Guardian 31st Jan., 1990.

'Folklore and rural history', Folklore Society News, 1990

'Rural history: towards a new disciplinary incorporation', Scottish Economic and Social History 10 (1990), pp.127-8.

E.M. Tranter

'Joan Thirsk: a bibliography', in J. Chartres and D. Hey (eds), English Rural History, 1500-1800: Essays in Honour of Joan Thirsk (Cambridge University Press, Past and Present Publications, 1990), pp.369-82.

'Burton Abbey holdings and the origins of Derby: a comment', Derbyshire Miscellany 12 (1990) pp.82-3.

RECENTLY COMPLETED THESES

Evelyn Christmas

'The growth of Gloucester, 1820-1851: tradition and innovation in a county town' (Ph.D. thesis, 1989).

This thesis examines the extent to which innovative forces altered Gloucester's character in the period 1820-1851, a time of accelerating change. The analysis is developed at three inter-related levels: the town itself, its regional functions and its more distant relationships. Some comparisons with other middle-ranking county towns contribute to the assessment of Gloucester's experience. The growth of Cheltenham and the Gloucester to Berkeley Canal were major factors.

The opening chapters consider the town's sphere of influence and wider regional connections, its main physical features and development, the growth of its population and the character of its occupational structure. The next four chapters are concerned with key sectors of the urban economy, beginning with the markets and inns. Then there follows a discussion of the more dynamic sectors comprising the retailers of the central shopping area, mercantile and related interests dependent on shipping and lastly the professions, in particular law, medicine and banking. The eighth chapter establishes the relationship between these sectors, the urban population more generally, the city corporation and the influence of its traditions. The 1851 census enumerators' returns and the leading newspaper were the principal sources for the study, extensively amplified by local directories and municipal records. Much additional material came from wills and probate valuations, parish and business records.

While occupational patterns and institutional functions changed slowly, the most vigorous growth occurred in mercantile activity. This was the main catalyst for developments in industry, railway construction and banking. Newcomers to the town were prominent among leading promoters. The greater economic strength more than compensated for losses to Cheltenham. It enhanced the city's regional importance, resulted in closer ties with Birmingham and enlarged the city's distant connections in this country and abroad.

Julian Heath
'Settlement and land use in North Wiltshire with special reference to the first to eleventh centuries A.D.' (M.Phil. thesis, 1989).

The primary objective of the thesis is to identify those areas in which settlement was concentrated and the way in which land was used in north Wiltshire during the period between the first and the eleventh centuries A.D. Particular reference is made to the north Wiltshire clay vale. Additionally the thesis draws upon evidence of Iron Age settlement to give some background to the study. It uses A.H.A. Hogg's theory that clusters of Latin names which have survived little altered indicate a peaceful integration of new cultures and extends this idea on the lines of Finberg's assertion, from evidence in Devon, that the survival of Celtic names can be indicative of pre-English land units. The thesis also endeavours to show the effect which a large area of woodland, later called Braydon Forest, had on the pattern of settlement and land use in the clay vale. Finally it tries to trace the development of Saxon settlement in the area, to identify those localities where multiple estates might have existed, and to catalogue the evidence for urbanisation. The main sources are archaeological evidence, place-names, Saxon charters and Domesday Book.

Evelyn Lord
'Spatial and social interaction in S.E. Surrey, 1750-1850' (Ph.D. thesis, 1989).

One of the central problems facing academic local historians is the extent of the territorial and social space occupied by communities in the past. This is crucial to the definition of the 'local' compoment in local history. The thesis works towards using the space occupied communities to define 'local' by measuring the effect of six spatial and social boundaries on nineteen contiguous but socially and topographically diverse rural communities in S.E. Surrey, Sussex and Kent. Patterns of interaction are mapped in relation to the administrative boundaries of the parish and county; the natural boundary of the pays; and the social boundaries formed by kinship, social structure and religion. Finally these boundaries are dissolved to form social areas. The sources used contain elements that describe movement - the chief of these are marriage registers and census data; a qualitative dimension is added by diaries and family papers. Nominal and linguistic material is also used, as well as artifacts, whilst the whole is set within the socio-economic context of the study area.

The social areas defined by interaction show a remarkable resemblance to those revealed by dialect, material culture, surname distribution and kinship networks. The main characteristics of these areas are that they extend over at least four communities which share an intense level of activity. These communities nest within a symbiotic framework of looser activity that goes beyond the study area to include market towns and an important urban centre.

Three keywords emerge in the study. The first of these is community - many parishes consisted of several communities reacting in different ways so that this is a more relevant description of groups of people on the ground than is the parish. The second is symbiosis - each community was an integral part of the whole. The last is process, because the patterns of interaction were not stable but responded to internal and external stimuli. In the final essence, the 'local' component in local history is defined as comprising up to four communities set within a loose regional framework. A viable research area for local historians should consist of at least four communities as single community studies are unique rather than local. This work contributes to the study both of continuity and of change within communities, as well as to the historiography and practice of local history.

M.A. DISSERTATIONS FOR 1989

Judy Bainbridge
'The social and cultural life of Great Malvern in 1871'.

It was not until the Victorian 'hydropathic age' that the Worcestershire village of Malvern was transformed into a flourishing spa town. This transformation and the water cure that initiated it have often been described, yet little attention has been paid to the social and cultural life of the town, especially after the opening of the railway in 1861. This study therefore investigates separately the recreational, educational and religious facilities available in the census year of 1871 and assesses the impact of the railway on the spa's rather staunch, middle-class image. Using the census enumerators' returns, guide books, trade directories and newspapers it is discovered that although many of the new facilities being provided were still influenced by strict class divisions and 'moral' values, the new influx of Birmingham 'day-trippers', as well as the decline of hydropathy, was slowly reducing the popularity of the spa among the middle classes. Nevertheless, although the days of 'taking the waters' at Malvern seemed to be nearing their end, much interesting evidence was found of the town's future function - as a superior educational and residential centre.

Simon Fletcher
'Crime in Cheltenham, 1848-51'.

In this dissertation an attempt is made to reach some conclusions about the nature of crime in a mid-nineteenth century town. A strong statistical framework underlies the analysis and the conclusions that are reached. To achieve this a variety of sources are used, including gaol calendars, quarter sessions records, petty sessions books and newspaper reports. A statistical analysis of over 1600 criminals and their offences is made, attention being paid to age and social status, crime rate and the diversity of criminal activity. This is expanded into a study of different aspects of crime, such as recidivism, juvenile crime, immorality and poverty. Conclusions show the dichotomy between

contemporary sensationalism and the experience of the vast majority of England's population. It is also shown that there was a strong correlation between crime and poverty. As the 'rights' of the poor are not articulate as such in the evidence available, the existence of a moral economy cannot be proved, but it is notable that (time and again) poverty is seen as a valid excuse for misdemeanour.

Trevor Hill

'The trading community of Shifnal and its geographical and genealogical linkages (a case study 1841-1861)'.

This dissertation sets out to study the trading population of Shifnal for a period during which the town experienced considerable economic change. The cause of this change was the collapse of its importance as a major post town and stopping point on the London to Holyhead coach road, when the railway linking Birmingham to Shrewsbury was built. Using a computer database, nominal record linkage of the tithe apportionment, the censuses of 1841, 51 and 61, trade directories, rate books and parish registers was achieved. From the data the origins of traders and their wives were traced, many of them having been born in other small market towns. In addition it was found that most of the tradespeople were linked by marriage. The follow-on of tradesmen by their wives, sons and daughters was also highlighted and in the case of one family of wheelwrights the continuity of trade was proved from the seventeenth century to the late nineteenth century.

Nan Hume

'Settlement and migration in Dorset, 1704 to 1860'.

This dissertation draws on over 2000 settlement examinations in the Dorset Record Office. Information from the examinations was analyzed by two statistical methods: firstly, individual migrations were studied, regardless of who made them, and the proportion of migrations within certain distance groupings was established. As might be expected by far the largest numbers of migrations took place within less than ten miles. Secondly, the migration histories of over 1500 examinees were analyzed in a study of the total distances moved by each person and of the number of separate movements made. Again the average distance was less than ten miles and the majority of examinees had moved no more than twice prior to examination. A special case-study of migration to and from Newfoundland, which had important economic effects in Dorset during the period, was also included in the dissertation.

David Reeve

'"Pity the poor labourer": a study of nineteenth-century protest songs and their relevance to popular culture'.

Recent historical studies of popular culture have used relatively unexplored sources. This study investigates one such source, folksongs, which give unique insights into attitudes of people in a specific historical situation. Chapter 1 discusses the methods and motivations of folksong collectors as it is essential to understand the historical development of collecting before an attempt is made to understand and evaluate the songs themselves. The second chapter uses protest songs to try to identify how the labouring poor recognised and organised themselves between 1780 and 1850. The findings disagree with Thompson's view of a homogeneous working class and suggest that instead there was less consensus between the different occupational groups before 1850, each having a distinct evaluation of how society should be changed. The final chapter explores this further, discussing the wider theoretical implications for local historians. The occupational unit is another means of detecting societal entities. Each job-specific group with its own separate culture formed an important type of community.

THE JOHN NICHOLS PRIZE FOR 1990

For many years the University of Leicester has offered an annual prize (now valued at £100), for an essay on some topic of English Local History. Candidates for the prize may write on a topic of their own choice, subject to the prior agreement of the Head of Department. Compositions which have already been published, or which have been awarded any other prize, are not eligible. Previous prize-winners have been Joan Thirsk, Alan Everitt, Jeremy Haslam, Brian Davey and John Cole; more recently prize-winners have included students who have recently completed Ph.D. theses in other universities, established academics and, in one case, an undergraduate who had written an outstanding B.A. dissertation. Essays must be original contributions to knowledge, based on genuine research and should not exceed 20,000 words in length; they should be submitted to the Department, together with a stamped, addressed envelope for return, before 31st December.

We are very pleased to announce that the prize-winning essay for 1990 is Andrew Walker's 'Attercliffe, c. 1841-1881: a study of a Sheffield township's iron and steel workers and their families in the workplace and the community.' Mr Walker's own summary of his essay is printed below.

Summary

This case-study attempts to question the usefulness of class-based analytical approaches to the examination of nineteenth-century industrial communities. An investigation into Attercliffe's development over this period through a detailed study of the inhabitants of four of its streets suggests that the popularly perceived notion of homogeneous working-class communitites is an unhelpful concept for the historian.

Attercliffe's population increased six-fold from 4,156 in 1841 to 26,965 in 1881, mainly owing to the growth of the iron and steel industry. Although, from the 1860s, a large Bessemer steel works became established in Attercliffe, the production of

iron and steel by the traditional crucible process continued there. The varying methods of manufacture and the various sizes of the works meant that different workers had differing workplace experiences.

Evidence suggests that at some stage in their working lives, many men were employed alongside their sons or other close male relatives in the iron and steel works. This, together with the tendency of many migrant workers both to live and work together, averted much of the anomie which contemporary observers feared might cause unrest. A strong attachment to Attercliffe prevailed among its inhabitants, revealed both through residential persistence and expansive kinship bonds. This is evident in the census returns, and also in the parish records where a strong preference for fellow Atterclivians as marital partners was discerned. Marriage records revealed that Attercliffe's remaining light-trade workers were reluctant to wed into families involved in the steel industry, preferring instead to find their marriage partners from families also engaged in the light trades.

Individuals' perceptions of what constituted their community varied dramatically, it was found, even among what we might suppose was the same socio-economic class. The fabric of individuals' social lives comprised many different threads. For some 'respectable' people perception of community was constructed around the family, 'rational recreation' and place of worship; others built their communities using bonds developed in the workplace and around the culture of the pub. Throughout, the 'community' of Attercliffe was very much the creation of its residents themselves: effective 'social control' from above remained conspicuously absent.

ANNUAL FIELD COURSE 1990

Over many weeks did Harold
Study maps (and plan excursions)
Study them and reproduce them
For his Easter field-course students
Who each chose a special project.....

How else but with the minuteness of a Hiawatha-type poem could one separate the elements of a week so bewilderingly full of variety, beauty and thorough, painstaking detail? But, for the sake of space - and the patience of the editor - here goes, in prose.

The S.A.G.A. began (our base was theirs also) when we arrived by various means, found our lodgings to be comfortably equipped and proceeded to set the pattern for several subsequent evenings. A contingent, armed with Sue's invaluable 'Good Pub Guide' - she needed it for her field-course project on inns - investigated Exeter's culinary offerings; Lorne and Euros lured Kathy to the bar and Tony was left in peace. The 'White Hart' ("Hoskins's favourite Pub" - but of course) drew the short straw and was found to be satisfying to thirst, palate and the penetrating gaze of travel-weary historians.

Our excursions began with an edited look at the enigmatic Compton Castle, the fortifications of which now seem remarkably benign in their comfortable valley. But the times in which the Gilbert family held the manor were punctuated by threats from the French and Henry VIII's wealthy subjects took no chances. A similarly hostile attitude must have prompted the greeting with which we were saluted as we passed along the "bungalized" edges of Paignton. (Churchill felt like that about his enemies, but he is generally pictured with his hand held palm-outwards). The other Devonians were very friendly and helpful, if somewhat bemused at times.

Through the geological strata and the layers of history, in farm, village, burh and borough, our 'lessons in looking' proceeded. The demands made upon energy and stamina were softened by the contrasts encountered: Tiverton's bustle and the anxious flamboyance of the Greenway memorials - set out when Purgatory was a reality, even to successful merchants - then the peace of gentle Cullompton, where sulks the menace of the Golgotha, torn from its eminence and contradicted by the light, delicacy and optimism of the fan-vaulting beneath which it lies.

Another day saw us amidst the strident majesty of Dartmoor, of tor and tumulus; the prehistoric mysteries of Grimspound and the Victorian ingenuity of the unique granite tramway from Haytor to Teignmouth. These were put into perspective at Poundsgate by the welcome given to us by Mrs Wilkinson, who then took over as guide to show us how life was, and is, lived at Lake Farm. The details discussed and speculated upon at Lettaford longhouse that morning were clarified for us when we were taken into Lake's ancient shippon, fields and barns.

There were mysteries of other kinds too. Why is 'Jamaica Inn' invoked on a board by the door of 'The Ship' in Exeter? (Raleigh's favourite inn? "Don't believe all that" - where had we heard that before?) Why was the atmospheric, marsh-encircled 'Double Locks Inn' - where the food incidentally is excellent - the venue for the National Juggling Championships? An unforgettable image from there: a group of young circus-folk practising with lighted torch-clubs as the night deepened.

It was fortunate that Lorne's addiction to a daily run, on return from the excursions, was not shared by our skilful and enthusiastic navigator as she needed every ounce of concentration for map-reading, and her feet began to give cause for concern after a day or two. However neither she nor the limping Kathy allowed their mobility problems to spoil the excursions too much.

Wednesday was a day of disappearances: Exmouth and its neighbours left "stranded" (an obsession of the course leader) by the river's withdrawal, the resulting flat sand-terrace now networked with later streets. Then the deceptive simplicity of Powderham where even the farms are landscaped. Here, too, the sea has beaten a retreat from the stern walls of the house, like an army repelled. Then the 'lost' chapel of Lidwell where we

would gladly have stayed longer debating the mysteries of that peaceful valley. But more mundane withdrawals beckoned at Dawlish where Civilization - in the form of lending-banks at least - was for once not unwelcome. And so, leaving behind Haldon ridge, "spiky with follies", and the questions surrounding the chapel of St Nicholas at Ringmore, we came "rapidly home".

Our last day, 'in the North', was not without a touch of zoology, for were they not lemmings that were seen escaping from the minibus as it hiccupped its way with unusual reluctance out of Hartland Hotel's car-park up a slope of fearful steepness and away from the ravenous sea? This appetizing day was rounded off at the 'White Hart'. Here for a while our guide could forget about time-checks and the dextrous drivers could also relax. (There is no truth in the rumour that it was North Coast agoraphobia that induced Sue to spend most of the evening in the 'phone booth).

The talks given, each student's project well amplified, thanks to examples, notes and pictures; with sunny memories we took our departure. Devon will be our yard-stick, reference and refreshment for some time to come.

(Phrases in double quotes are taken directly from the tour leader).

Chris Draycott

BOOKS WRITTEN BY FRIENDS

Jennifer Burt, The Silsoe Perspective: from the National College of Agricultural Engineering to the Cranfield Rural Institute (Cranfield Press, 1989), 159pp.

The British agricultural engineering industry was extremely worried during the 1950s at the apparent stagnation and backwardness in the training of skilled professional engineers in comparison with the U.S.A., Japan and West Germany, and feared losing the initiative in its field. As a result the National College of Agricultural Engineering was founded in 1960, commencing with 16 students. From these small beginnings the College expanded, gaining an enviable reputation for the quality of its students and services and became part of the Cranfield Institute of Technology in 1975. Silsoe College became the Faculty of Agricultural Engineering, Food Production and Rural Land Use, a title which reflected its widening interests. The College is now a member of the Cranfield Rural Institute formed in 1987, which is a federation of teaching and research groups based on the Silsoe and Shuttleworth campuses in Bedfordshire.

This history was commissioned to celebrate the first twenty-five years of Silsoe College, its academic and social development and the people who were instrumental in establishing the high regard in which it is now held. The National College, when first set up, had to define the educational requirements of the professional engineer and those qualities and skills necessary for the mechanization of agriculture in the widest social and economic sense throughout the developing world. The policies thus evolved have been applied world-wide and have been exported by British graduates working abroad and by those coming from overseas to study at Silsoe.

From tiny acorns the mighty oak will grow, but this maxim is only realised by proper nourishment and care: Silsoe College was fortunate in the people involved in its growth, both from the educational, professional and manufacturing worlds. Whilst this history is essentially the record of an institution, it is equally concerned with people of vision and enthusiasm by whose effort the College takes its place in the world today. The Silsoe Perspective may be obtained from the Cranfield Press, Cranfield Institute of Technology, Cranfield, Bedford MK43 0AL at a price of £15.

Steph Mastoris, Around Market Harborough in Old Photographs (Alan Sutton, 1989), 160pp.

Historic photographs provide one of the easiest ways to stimulate popular interest in the past. Perhaps their main fascination lies in the way in which they allow changes in a familiar environment to be easily recognised. Another can be found in the incidental details far removed from the main subject in the photographer's eye. Most general townscapes, for instance, contain considerable information on retailing, modes of transport and costume besides the more obvious local topographical details.

Like many local history museums, the Harborough Museum at Market Harborough (a branch of the Leicestershire Museums Service) possesses an extensive collection of photographs which is constantly in use in displays and for research. In fact many people just drop in to the museum to engage in a quiet half hour of reminiscence about a favourite place or theme. When the museum was approached by the publishers, Alan Sutton, to produce a volume for their Old Photographs series, it seemed a golden opportunity to share with a wide public a few of the most interesting images in the collection, and to provide a little more interpretation than most personal users of the photographs normally get.

The book reproduces approximately 250 photographs, dating from the mid-1850s to the early 1970s, but the majority are from the period between the turn of the century and the 1950s. The book is divided into seven thematic sections. The first deals with the 'lost' topography of the town and concentrates on landmarks and buildings which no longer exist or have been radically changed. The second section, on transport, gives a general sketch of the various methods of communication in the area before the widespread use of the motorcar.

The next three sections deal with the people of the area by looking at education, earning a living and leisure. The education section looks at schools and their buildings around the town. In addition it attempts to show what children from a wide range of backgrounds actually looked like when attending

school by reproducing class photographs from one decade - the 1920s. The section on earning a living demonstrates the wide range of occupations which have been carried on in Market Harborough over the last century and a half. It begins with manufacturing industry and progresses through the public services and private domestic service to agriculture, the market and retailing. The section on leisure covers sport, entertainment and 'culture' and again shows the large number of activities on offer in the area.

The concluding three sections deal with events, both sad and happy. The first concentrates on local activity during the first and second World Wars. The surviving photographs suggest how formal were the events of the first conflict. There are the official photographs of the send-off and return of the troops, patriotic meetings and the dedication of war memorials. By contrast, the Second World War seems to be recorded only in snapshots, showing hasty glimpses of the 'home front' and the newcomers in the area - land girls, American servicemen and P.O.W.s. The book concludes on a happier note with a section on public celebrations and other communal events such as crowning village May queens and the Market Harborough Carnival.

Selecting such a small number of photographs from the five to six thousand images currently held by the museum was a very stimulating exercise. They had to be interesting in themselves and to be of use in sketching the history of Market Harborough and its environs. The exercise made the author realize that, despite the size of the collection, there were very few photographs on many aspects of daily life such as leisure, religious and political life, personal rites of passage and even the topography of the town's suburbs.

One of the most worthwhile aspects of compiling this book was that it gave the museum a golden excuse to launch appeals for photographs with a foreseeable goal to offer the public. The response was very good and about 20% of the photographs were either loaned or donated directly as a result of the appeal. Now that the book is published, it too has stimulated further donations and loans. The museum is now negotiating with the publishers to produce a second volume, this time including villages further removed from Market Harborough. If this is possible it is hoped that much-needed photographs from these places will fill many gaps in the museum's collection. Around Market Harborough is available from bookshops at £6.95 or by post (50p. extra) from The Harborough Museum, Council Offices, Adam and Eve Street, Market Harborough, Leicestershire LE16 7LT.

J.R.Smith, The Speckled Monster: Smallpox in England, 1670-1970, with particular reference to Essex, (Essex Record Office, 1987), 212pp.

Smallpox was England's chief killer disease from the end of the plague epidemic of 1665 until the later eighteenth century. Next to plague it was the most feared and infectious of all diseases and its world-wide eradication in 1977 was a remarkable achievement of international co-operation. In this history of the disease in England over a period of 300 years, tracing successive campaigns of prevention, immunisation, isolation and eradication, a wealth of contemporary source material is exploited and the broad context of national events interwoven with case-studies using the rich archive collections of the Essex Record Office.

The study commences with examinations of the effects of smallpox on the economy of towns and villages, of its cost in terms of human suffering and of early attempts at control. Consideration is given to the impact of inoculation following its introduction in 1721 and the development of the Suttonian system, crucial to the treatment's popular acceptance. The analysis of the fatality rate of smallpox and the benefits of general inoculations is an important contribution to the debate on late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century population growth. Devoting a chapter to Daniel Sutton, who began his practice in Essex, the author rescues England's greatest inoculator from oblivion to place him and his father among the front rank of medical pioneers.

The introduction of vaccination at the end of the eighteenth century began a controversy which ended in 1840 with legislation banning inoculation. In relating the main events of these transitional years the author shows how a continuing preference by the poor for inoculation and the growth of suspicion of vaccination resulted in a confused range of local immunisation policies. Parliament's deepening involvement in the vaccination question is chronicled, attention being given to the growth of the anti-vaccination movement following the introduction of compulsory vaccination in 1853. Increasingly identified with the wider movement of working-class radicalism and firmly caught up in national politics the anti-vaccination campaign was a major issue in the general election of 1906.

Through studies of 33 Essex pest houses the changing isolation facilities from the seventeenth century to the 1930s are traced and attention is given to the nineteenth-century legislative framework, the Victorian movements for medical, public health and workhouse reforms and to the influence of John Thresh, the first Essex County Medical Officer.

This account of smallpox and its opponents will prove fascinating to the general reader while social, medical and population historians will find in the new evidence much of value for their own fields of study. The Speckled Monster is available from bookshops at £14.95 or by post from the Essex Record Office, County Hall, Chelmsford CM1 1LX at £16.25.

Howard Usher, William Lamb, Viscount Melbourne (1988), 22pp.; Fatal Females (1990), 40pp.

These two booklets are based upon a collection of unpublished letters in the archives at Melbourne Hall. The Melbourne estate, formerly in the hands

of the Cokes, was owned by the Lambs from 1750 to 1869 and during this time they maintained a regular correspondence with their land agent at Melbourne. The agent was based at Melbourne but was also responsible for property at Over Haddon, Castle Donington, Melton Mowbray, Boothby Graffoe, Greasley, Selston and Duston. The letters refer mainly to estate matters but since some of the family were involved in matters of state, reference is frequently made to personal, political and national affairs.

William Lamb, second Viscount Melbourne, was in charge of the estate from 1828 to his death in 1848. This period includes his time as Home Secretary (1830-1834) and as Prime Minister to King William IV and to Queen Victoria (1835-1841). He used his Melbourne agent to obtain information about the conditions in the local coal mines and textile factories which was, no doubt, of use in his political career. Financial worries dominate the correspondence after his resignation and the last few years of his life were unhappy ones.

The femmes fatales of the second book are William Lamb's mother, Elizabeth Lady Melbourne, and his sister, Emily Lady Cowper, later Lady Palmerston. Elizabeth wrote a number of letters between 1768 and 1818 on behalf of her husband, the first Viscount. Emily inherited the Melbourne estates in her own right and managed them from 1853 to 1869. In addition to their more serious dealings with estate matters both ladies were part of the social whirl of the Whig party and both facets of their correspondence are covered. These publications are available from Melbourne Hall, Melbourne, Derby; priced £1 and £2.

Michael Wickes, Devon in the Religious Census of 1851 (the author, 1990), 157pp.

This is a transcript of the Devon section of the 1851 Ecclesiastical Census, accompanied by an introduction and indexes of place-names, surnames and denominations. Approximately 1300 census forms from the twenty registration districts which lay within Devon are now deposited at the Public Record Office at Kew. About half of these forms were compiled by incumbents from the Church of England, while the rest were returned from a wide variety of dissenting denominations, including Roman Catholics, Independents and Congregationalists, Baptists, Wesleyans and other Methodist churches, Plymouth Brethren and other independent congregations, and even by two Jewish synagogues in Exeter and Plymouth. Generally speaking, the census forms reveal that the Anglicans still comprised the dominant religious grouping in the county in 1851 but that their rural strongholds were being increasingly contested by missionary advances from the Baptists, the Methodist churches and from the Plymouth Brethren.

The author had expected to discover a contest for supremacy being waged at this date between the Anglicans and Methodist churches. The Bible Christians, a Methodist denomination which was founded in North Devon in 1815, were particularly strong in the rural north and west of the county. However, he was surprised by the number of Plymouth Brethren congregations in the county by 1851. The Plymouth Brethren was the name given to a group of autonomous churches which had sprung up in Plymouth around 1830. They had a strong dislike of denominational titles and apparently left few records behind them. Their presence can often be overlooked by the desk-bound researcher, but they were making significant advances by 1851 even into the rural areas around Barnstaple.

Michael Wickes has also written other books on aspects of local history since leaving Leicester University, including A History of Huntingdonshire (Phillimore, 1985) and The Westcountry Preachers: a History of the Bible Christians 1815-1907, still available from the author at £3.75p. (£7 overseas). Devon in the Religious Census of 1851 may also be obtained from the author, at 30 One End Street, Appledore, Bideford, EX39 1PN, price £20 (£25 overseas).

NEWS OF FORMER STUDENTS AND OTHER FRIENDS

A good number of former students and other Friends responded when Anne Mitson invited members to send brief details of their careers and family life for inclusion in the Newsletter. The responses are printed below. They show just how far-flung our membership is - from Northumberland to Brighton, Dorchester to Leiden - and the wide range of employment which qualified former members of the Department can find for themselves. They may also help to convince current students in the Department that there is hope for them yet!

Philip Brindle (Ph.D. 1983). Lecturer at Fairleigh Dickinson University, U.S.A., 1983-4; lecturer at Leeds University, 1984-5; extra-mural tutor, Hull University, 1986; P.G.C.E. (distinction), 1986; Rowley Regis VI Form College, 1986-9; lecturer, Hammersmith and West London College, from 1989.

Geoffrey Brown (M.A. 1987). Now Head of Lower School, King's School, Peterborough; married, 1988, to Fiona.

Jennifer Burt (M.A. 1987). Part-time tutor in Northants., for the Department of Adult Education, University of Leicester; part-time archivist to the Drayton Estate; author of The Silsoe Perspective (see this issue of the Newsletter).

Nick Corcos (M.A. 1983). Research assistant for

Weston-super-Mare Civic Society; then publisher with Alan Sutton, Gloucester; now with British Telecom's International Customer Services Department; local broadcaster and writer on aspects of Somerset history.

Peter de Clercq (M.A. 1978). Museum councillor, Dutch Ministry of Culture, 1979; since 1983 Curator at the National Museum of the History of Science and Medicine, Leiden, with responsibilities for prints and drawings, editing museum publications and research into eighteenth-century scientific instruments; married to Jade Seow whom he met at Leicester; two daughters.

Hazel Edwards (M.A. 1988). M.A. in Museum Studies, University of Leicester, 1989; then Assistant Museums Officer, Wansbeck District Council (Northumberland), running museums in Ashington.

Steve Fletcher (M.A. 1983). Returned to librarianship; no time for real local history (only dabbling) - hence frustration!

Jane Hall (nee Bickerton M.A. 1979). Local Studies Advisory Teacher with North Yorks. County Council, involved in integrating Local History into the curriculum at all levels.

Clive Hart (M.A. 1985). Sheffield City Museum, Department of Human History, with special responsibility for the rich archaeological collections of the Peak District and S. Yorkshire; tutor on historic tours throughout U.K., for American and English operators.

Mary Hufford (M.A. 1985) Elected Deputy General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers, second in command to Doug. McAvoy.

Nan Hume (M.A. 1989). H.M.Customs and Excise, V.A.T. Control Officer at Windsor.

Terry Kilburn (M.A. 1980). Head of History Department, St Helena School, Chesterfield; married to Gill, with two children, Faye and Callum.

Gary Lewitt (M.A. 1984). Civil Servant, Ministry of Defence; married to Anne Barker....

Kate Nightingale (nee Moss) (M.A. 1983). Area Administrative Officer, Social Services Department, Notts. County Council.

Simon Pawley (M.A. 1981; Ph.D. 1984). Now teaching English, but involved in local archaeology in spare time; contributor to the forthcoming Historical Atlas of Lincolnshire.

Alan Petford (M.A. 1978). History Master, Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Blackburn, 1977-85; Senior History Master, Hipperholme Grammar School, since 1985; M.A. dissertation, substantially revised, published in Trans. Lancs. Cheshire Antiquarian Soc.84 (1987); author of Saddleworth Surveyed (1983); contributor to Bulletin Saddleworth Hist. Soc. and editor for Halifax Antiquarian Soc.

Suella Postles (M.A. 1979). Since 1974 Keeper of Social History, Nottingham City Museums, with responsibility for the Brewhouse Yard Museum.

David Ramsey (B.A., Open University, 1981). School teacher; author of Groby and its Railways (1982) and of papers in Leicestershire and Rutland Heritage.

David Reeve (M.A. 1989). Diploma in Archive Administration, University of Wales at Bangor, 1989; then archivist at Dorset County Record Office, Dorchester; married to Anne, 1989.

John Roles (M.A. 1982). Curator, Royston and District Museum, 1983-6; Keeper of Local History and Archaeology, Royal Pavilion Art Gallery and Museum, Brighton, from 1986.

Ann Saunders (nee Cox-Johnson) (Ph.D. 1965). Lecturer, Richmond College since 1979; author of London North of the Thames (1972), London: the City and Westminster (1975), Regent's Park (1981), The Regent's Park Villas (1981), The Art and Architecture of London (1984, with a foreword by H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh, winner of the London Tourist Board's Special Guidebook of the Year competition); editor of Costume and of the publications of the London Topographical Society.

Lynda Spencer (nee Jones) (M.A. 1981). Formerly at Rutland County Museum, Oakham; then employed in local government; now cost accountant for G.E.C., Leicester; married to Dr A.G. Spencer, 1988.

Chris Thornton (Ph.D. 1989). E.S.R.C. Research Associate, Department of English Local History until May 1990; Junior Research Fellow, Hertford College, Oxford, from October 1990.

Ralph Weedon (M.A. 1988). Research Assistant, Harborough Museum and Department of English Local History, 1988-89; Research Associate on Small Towns Project, Centre for Urban History, University of Leicester, since 1989; Ph.D in progress for University of Manchester.

Peter Warner (Ph.D. 1982). Lecturer in History, Homerton College, Cambridge.

Norman Williams (M.A. 1986). Undertaking a study of Leicestershire villages in the nineteenth century.

JOAN THIRSK: A PERSONAL APPRECIATION

On June 28th the Cambridge University Press gave a party at Clare College to launch English Rural Society, 1500-1800: Essays in Honour of Joan Thirsk. Speeches of welcome and of homage were given by the editors of the volume, John Chartres and David Hey, and by Bill Davies of the Press who is responsible, among other things, for the Agrarian History of England and Wales. Joan then replied with a witty account of her involvement with agrarian history in general, with the Cambridge Agrarian History, with the Past and Present Society (under whose auspices the book is published) and with the Universities of London, Leicester and Oxford. Further reminiscences are to be found in the first chapter of the Essays, 'Joan Thirsk: a personal appreciation' by Alan Everitt. Here we reprint a few small extracts from that appreciation, recalling Joan's work for the first published volume of the Agrarian History, her honorary degree from the University of Leicester and her early teaching in the Department.

"The first time I met Joan after my appointment as a research assistant to the Agrarian History was in the King's Library in the British Museum. Naturally we did not meet to admire the splendour of the architecture; we had a mind above such matters; at least Joan had, though I was not yet so fully regenerate myself. We did not even spare a thought for poor old Farmer George, whose books adorned the shelves around us and who, so to speak, had provided us with this rather splendid meeting place rent-free. We sat like any two tourists on one of the wooden benches, near the Reading Room end, of course, and there my first task on the Agrarian History was allotted to me. But allotted is not quite the right word. What Joan said was, 'I wondered if you would like to....' Naturally I did like; nothing indeed could be more delightful; for what Joan suggested was that I should go down to Maidstone, select thirty probate inventories relating to the Weald of Kent and thirty relating to the Downland, and with those as a basis make a comparison between the agriculture of the two countrysides.... We had met in the King's Library because we had no room of our own to meet in. Society, I need hardly say, was still in a very primitive state in 1957, and nobody had yet thought of having an 'office', though I believe there was a rumour of such things at advanced places like Cambridge. Neither did we need a room, for we had no equipment to put in it; no telephone, no bookshelves, no filing cabinets, no files even except the most economical manilla folders we could find."

"In 1985 the University of Leicester conferred upon Joan the honorary degree of D.Litt., a rare distinction for a former member of the academic staff. I happened to ring Joan two or three days after she had received the Vice-Chancellor's letter informing her of Senate's decision. 'I just couldn't believe it', she said, 'I was completely staggered!' I was not staggered, though it was not I who had put her name forward. But there was also a reason why the honorary degree gave her old department a pleasure beyond the acknowledgement of her scholarship, and beyond the pleasure it gave others. It was the simple fact that she had left such a deep imprint on it. I do not mean that she had left imitators; that would not have pleased her, and in fact relatively few of its graduates have pursued subjects very near to her own. Perhaps it is a way of looking at the evidence which has held us close together since she left. After a seminar given in the department in the 1980s she kindly wrote back, and this is what she said: 'I thought the discussion went well; I found it very useful. It always does go well in your department. In some places that paper would have fallen flat. But I feel that we speak the same language.'"

"Two essential strands in any living language are a sense of proportion and a sense of humour. There must be many individuals, many meetings, and many committees that have found their problems guided towards a happy solution by Joan's practical wisdom and her quick but never scornful laughter. 'That must be Joan', Harold Fox said to me one day as we came into the department together on a day when Joan was visiting, and heard the gentle silvery sound coming down the corridor through an open door. It was a sound with which I had become very familiar when Joan still held a post at Leicester, and we occupied adjacent rooms in the old H-Block. The walls were very thin and the rooms poky beyond the dreams of the U.G.C. But if you had only three or four people for your Special Subject, you could just squeeze them into those little cubicles originally built for nurses. I had never realized before that Tudor economic documents were so humorous. Or was it perhaps the voluntary palaeography class Joan put on? Palaeography is a great opener of reluctant minds."

(These extracts are reprinted with the permission of the author, the publisher and the Past and Present Society. The book may be obtained through any bookshop at a price of £37.50)

ANOTHER LETTER FROM JAPAN

I was placed at the Department of English Local History by the British Council during two years from 1959 to 1961. It was a really small department; the Head was Dr H.P.R. Finberg, Senior Research Fellow in Agrarian History was Mrs Thirsk and

Research Assistants in Agrarian History were Dr Alan M. Everitt and Dr L.M. Midgley. Professor Finberg had an office on the first floor of the Fielding Johnson Building where I had a tutorial on Tuesday afternoon fortnightly. Professor Finberg revised my transcription of medieval ministers' accounts of the Devon manors of Isabella de Fortibus, Countess of Devon. When he entertained guests with wine at lunch at the Percy Gee Building, he used to fall asleep while checking my manuscript! Isabella had manors in Tiverton, Topsham, Exminster and Plympton, so I wanted to visit those manors. It was very pleasant to see those places although it took much time using public transport and on foot. I was especially interested in the Countess Weir constructed by Isabella on the estuary of the Exe in 1284, which prevented shipping for coming up the river as far as Exeter Bridge, so that citizens of Exeter were compelled to land their merchandise at Topsham. I crossed the Exe by a small ferry boat from Topsham to Exminster. It was a pleasant surprise to know that the boatman was a former sailor of H.M. Navy stationed at Yokosuka Port. In a farmhouse at Dartmeet I enjoyed tea having homemade bread with Devonshire cream and strawberry jam.

At the end of my stay, I submitted my thesis entitled 'The economic development of some Devon manors in the thirteenth century' to Professor Finberg. Later Professor Hoskins kindly communicated it to the centenary meeting of the Devonshire Association and it was published in the Association's Transactions in 1962.

Mrs Thirsk invited me to dinner at her house in London, and Dr Everitt invited me to dinner at his flat at Springfield Road. The members of the Department were always kind and helpful. I usually worked in a room on the second floor of a tower of the Fielding Johnson Building where the Hatton Collection was kept, and met with Dr G.H. Martin and Mr Norman Scarfe. As I was admitted to the senior common room I had the honour of making an acquaintance with Professor J. Simmons, Dr H.J. Dyos and Dr I. Neustadt. The committee of the Senior Common Room invited Dr W.G. Hoskins to speak to its members one afternoon. I was fascinated with his speech: he talked on 'the great rebuilding of rural England' telling us his experience in exploring old farmhouses and explaining how the way of life changed during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At the Congregation for Honorary Degrees held at de Montfort Hall, upon the recommendation of Professor Finberg, I presume, the University conferred an honorary degree on Miss Joan Wake, noted local historian of Northamptonshire. I was deeply impressed by the elegant old lady with stick in hand who appeared on the stage and got her hood.

As my dig was in a rather neglected old Victorian house at 8 Elms Road off the London Road, I used to join communion service on Sunday mornings at Knighton Parish Church. I also joined Evensong held at St. Nicholas Church, official chapel to the University. Those churches are rather low church tradition. An English friend of mine took me to All Souls in the town, It was very high church tradition, and the Vicar, the Rev. E.C.B. Dunford, is now retired in Cornwall. The Rev. Dunford had been a bomber pilot for the RAF and when he was interviewed by German T.V. directors for a programme about the bombings during the Second World War, he suggested also that they contact me knowing that I had survived American bombing in Tokyo. I never saw the programme. Recently the Rev. Canon M. Wilson, Cathedral Church of St. Martin Leicester, visited Yokohama diocese and told me that All Souls has no congregation and is now closed. How sad it is!

Recently I renewed my connection with Leicester, meeting Dr John Scott of the Sociology Department and Dr Anthony Sutcliffe of the Department of Economic and Social History, in Tokyo. It would be nice if I could visit the Department in the near future.

K. Ugawa

(Professor Ugawa is now at the Department of Economics, St Paul's University, Tokyo)

LOCAL HISTORIANS IN THE MUSEUMS WORLD

Hartland Quay Museum

Hartland Quay Museum in North Devon celebrated its tenth anniversary this year. It was founded by the marine artist Mark Myers and myself, then a teacher. A Californian by birth, Mark Myers has gained an international reputation for his work which is recognised in his membership of the Royal Society of Marine Artists and its American and Canadian equivalents. He came to North Devon in 1968 to serve as bosun on the replica of the Nonsuch which was built by Hinks of Appledore. For myself I gladly relinquished my carer as a teacher to manage the museum. My interest in coastal history grew in the early 1970s during painting expeditions along the shoreline of Hartland. I am now the curator of Tiverton Museum and am currently completing a doctoral thesis (University of Leicester) on the maritime history of North Devon. Although the museum now has paid staff, its control and development is still the responsibility of its two founders.

The museum was established after consultations with the owner of Hartland Quay, Sir Denis Stucley. We decided to house the collection in a large room in part of a range of terraced cottages opposite an hotel and next to a car park. The location was ideal. The buildings are situated on the remains of a sea-dissected valley less than 100 feet above sea level and have, as a backdrop, sheer 300-foot cliffs. Work on preparing the displays began in early 1980; the theme was the coastal history of Hartland. Painting, decorating, case construction, model-making, caption writing, and a whole range of other tasks were undertaken by the enthusiastic founders. Further help with photography, typing, printing and

electrical installation was freely given by friends. The museum was officially opened by Sir Denis on July 1st. Three years later a room devoted almost entirely to shipwrecks was added. A seven-foot model of the coast shows the position of about 140 wrecks, one of which can be seen from the museum at low tide.

In addition to the room devoted to shipwrecks there are now displays concerned with lifesaving and Hartland Point lighthouse, coastal trades and vessels, lime-burning, fishing, geology, natural history (including a small aquarium) and the history of Hartland Quay which lost its harbour in the late nineteenth century. An engine from a Coastal Command Wellington bomber which crashed into the cliffs was acquired two years ago. The museum has published guides to the coast and the very popular Hartland Quay: the Story of a Vanished Port (available from the museum, Hartland Quay, Bideford). More recently improvements to the museum environment have been successfully completed.

Michael Nix

Leicester Museums, Department of Education

Leicester Museums Arts and Records Service boasts one of the largest and most innovative departments of education in the country. There are seven specialist Education Officers each of whom has responsibility for one aspect of the Museum's collections which are housed, county-wide, in sixteen separate buildings.

My area of responsibility is that of interpreting and making available to all people and groups the human history and archaeology collections. Because of the current circumstances of my funding (four-fifths of my salary is paid by Leicester Education Department) the greatest proportion of my time is spent with school groups.

The main point and purpose of museum education is that of introducing the various client groups to the wonders of objects from the past, which they can then experience for themselves first-hand. With the archaeology collection I am able to go much further than this and to offer the opportunity for 'hands on' experience of original objects. I am of course limited in this aim by the fragile nature of most objects although here in Leicester we are blessed with a large reserve collection of Roman material. The 'handling' materials which I am able to use are mainly pots, some in fragments, some complete, tesserae and other building materials, metalwork, skeletal material and, occasionally, glass. The first-hand experience of being able to touch and examine these objects really does, with all ages and kinds of people, create a feeling of wonder. I am hoping to achieve more than this, but the sense of wonder is the greatest pleasure of my work.

Clearly, there is not enough time for me to work directly with every school group which visits the various museums housing aspects of human history, so many of my days are spent in advising teachers, both individually and on the courses which I organise on a regular basis. I also produce background materials for teachers, including 'activity packs', on the collections and how to use them. In addition I work with trainee teachers at Leicester Polytechnic (B.Ed. students) and students on the PGCE course at Leicester University. Time is allowed (half a day per week) for personal research which enhances an understanding of the Leicestershire collections and how they reflect aspects of Leicestershire history. It is not always possible in a crowded timetable to find the time for research but I am grateful that the principle has been established.

A new aspect of my work which I am in the process of developing is that of arranging an 'adult education' service. So far this has taken the form of Saturday Schools for the general public, the most recent being a day devoted to 'The Vikings in Leicstershire'. A 'scholarly' weekend conference, with papers to be published, on 'Anglo-Saxon Leicestershire' is planned for March 1991. I plan to extend this work into Summer Schools and weekend field trips.

And now, to the 1000 dollar question: how does one become part of the world of museum education? Not easily, it must be said, but possible of course, and with a postgraduate degree in English Local History that possibility becomes more likely! The basic requirements are a relevant degree, a PGCE or a postgraduate qualification in museum studies and of course experience in a relevant field of education.

Anyone thinking of going into museum education work will be assured of a job which is interesting, varied and has almost endless scope for innovation. But a warning must be given here, shared I would add by most of my colleagues, that it is only a matter of time until all museum departments and most particularly education departments will have to find ways to earn their 'keep' and become, at least to some degree, self-financing. The effects of this on the currently free museum education service is not at all clear but it will certainly be profound and probably to the detriment of the facilities offered.

Jill Bourn

MARGINALISING LOCAL HISTORY

The final report of the National Curriculum History Working Group is an ambitious attempt to bring coherence and structure to the teaching of history in schools. Key Stage 2 of the National History Curriculum is of particular importance for those interested in local history. For the first time, the teaching of a local history 'School Designed History Study Unit' (SDHSU) is made compulsory for all pupils aged 8 to 11 years. Thereafter, teachers have the option of developing a SDHSU in Key Stages 3 and 4 which could include a limited amount of local history.

The final report identifies 'two distinct strands'

of local history: a) the use of local examples to illustrate wider history; and b) the use of the local community as a distinct and comprehensive unit of study. The Working Group is correct to suggest that, where they exist, the papers of a local citizen or foreign visitor can be important sources which may shed light on local, national and even global events. It is true that the investigation of a site such as a Roman villa or an eighteenth-century canal network can enhance the study of Roman Britain or the Industrial Revolution.

Where local history is taught in schools it usually takes the form of the Working Group's second 'strand', either as part of lower secondary school humanities or under the 'History around us' module of the now appparently doomed G.C.S.E. Schools History Project. The danger is that this 'strand' produces the tendency to see a single community in isolation, often taking little more than a largely antiquarian approach to the study of local history and in so doing perpetuating a host of local myths and misinterpretations - I still have great difficulty in convincing fourth-year pupils that Cesterfelda was not the Roman name for Chesterfield!

The History Working Group's final report sees local history as an area of historical enquiry that ought to be included somewhere in the proposed National History Syllabus and Key Stage 2 as the safest place for it. The effect is to marginalise the study of local history in schools. The inclusions of a single SDHSU at Key Stage 2, probably amounting to no more than one term's teaching out of eleven years covered by the National History Syllabus is hardly likely to promote radical change in the delivery of local history in schools and there is a real danger that it will be all the local history that is taught to pupils between the ages of 5 and 16. The way in which local history is perceived in the History Working Group's final report is in need of critical review. An additional compulsory course in the study of English (and/or Welsh, and/or Scottish) local history at, say, Key Stage 4 (14 to 16 years) would help provide pupils with a much broader appreciation of the richness and diversity of local history through which they could come to a better understanding of their own community. Notwithstanding the efforts of a few dedicated teachers, good practice in the methodology and delivery of local history in schools will continue to be patchy and largely antiquarian in nature due to the marginal place assigned to the study of local history in the National History Syllabus.

Terry Kilburn

THE SHAPWICK PROJECT

The Shapwick Project is intended to develop eventually into a fully multi-disciplinary, large-scale historic landscape research initiative. It is being run under the auspices of the University of Bristol's Department for Continuing Education, with Mick Aston as co-ordinator. The esssential aims of the Project are two-fold: first, to determine the origin, nature and extent of early settlement, field-systems and land-use within the bounds of the ancient ecclesiastical parish of Shapwick in Somerset; and secondly to assess under field conditions the efficacy of orthodox archaeological methodologies, and, where these are wanting, to design new approaches tailored to the specific challenges raised by the Project's working demands and constraints. These will include, for example, the extensive use of inexperienced (but eagle-eyed and highly enthusiastic) schoolchildren as field-walkers and general assistants.

My own interest in Shapwick began in 1982 when research into the post-medieval enclosure of the village's fields - my M.A. dissertation in the Department of English Local History - led me to speculate on the posssibility that the field system, and indeed the settlement itself, were both planned forms dating from a reorganization in the late Anglo-Saxon period. These conjectures were later published in Proceedings of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society, 127 (1983).

Shapwick lies on the northern slope of the Polden Hills in central Somerset, which run in an east-west direction between Street and Puriton. The northern part of the parish extends down on to the Somerset Levels. From at least the early eighth century until the Dissolution Shapwick was a manor of Glastonbury Abbey and displays strong indications of having formerly been a place of some importance, perhaps even the caput of a pre-Conquest estate extending to at least 60 hides. As a Glastonbury manor, Shapwick possesses a wealth of detailed medieval documentation, now dispersed among several different repositories, and also an excellent range of post-Dissolution manorial documents held at the Somerset Record Office.

The early fourteenth-century church at Shapwick can be precisely dated from documentary evidence, having been built anew on its present site in the centre of the village to replace an earlier structure in a field called Old Church a few hundred yards to the east. The site of the old church has, as far as is known, has remained undisturbed since its abandonment, apart from plough-damage. A recent aerial photograph has revealed traces of the structure itself, enclosed by a large enceinte, perhaps a churchyard, whose area seems to be out of all proportion to the small size of the church. Because of its potential, this site will be a primary target for the detailed attention of the Project, and already the suggestion has been made that the old church may have been an Anglo-Saxon minster.

In other respects the results of the aerial survey have been no less spectacular. The dry summer of 1989 revealed a superb variety of crop and soil marks scattered liberally through the parish, including possible relict field systems. Perhaps the

greatest revelation to date so far as aerial photography is concerned has been the geology. The initial opinion of Dr Peter Hardy, based on first acquaintance in the field, was that the geology was at best unprepossessing and thoroughly 'ordinary'. The first set of aerial photographs has, however, revealed clear surface traces of entire lithological sequences, including faults. One particularly striking view shows that Shapwick village itself sits astride a massive relict sand bar, the result, thinks Dr Hardy, of post-glacial flooding at a time when the Levels were an inland sea; the area around Shapwick consisted of a number of islands as outliers of the main Polden ridge. In the absence of published large-scale geological maps of the Shapwick area, Dr Hardy's analysis, based on further, more extensive aerial survey coupled with detailed field study, will be crucial in providing a firm foundation for the studies in other disciplines which will form the core components of the Project's work.

At present the Project is being run on a small-scale, informal basis, members of the team giving their services voluntarily. Members at present include Mick Aston (field archaeology); Michael Costen (toponymy and medieval documentation); Peter Hardy (geology); the Somerset and South Avon Vernacular Buildings Research Group; and staff and pupils from Shapwick School. Experts from the SSAVBRG have already served the Project splendidly; they have shown that the present Shapwick House, a largely early seventeenth-century structure, was built around the surviving core of a late medieval house, almost certainly the abbot's residence and at least as early as the mid-fifteenth century. The Group's work will now focus mainly on detailed surveys of as many as possible of the domestic and farm buildings in the parish. In the near future it is hoped to recruit a botanist to the team, and other specialists will be seconded as and when required. An initial grant has been kindly made by the Trustees of the Maltwood Fund of the Royal Society of Arts, and additional funding from other sources will be arranged as work progresses.

No definitive timetable has yet been worked out, but, depending on results, the life of the Project will probably extend to at least the middle of the decade. Indeed the hope has been expressed that eventually Shapwick may to some extent evolve into Somerset's own Wharram Percy. Following in principle the example of the Somerset Levels Papers the fruits of the Shapwick research will be published in a series of annual Reports. The first of these appeared in 1988, and by the time you read this the second will be available. Copies of these and subsequent Reports may be obtained from: Mick Aston, Department for Continuing Education, University of Bristol, Wills Memorial Building, Queen's Road, Bristol BS8 1HR.

Nick Corcos

THE GARDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

July saw the twenty-fifth Annual General Meeting of the Garden History Society held, appropriately, at St Mary's College, Strawberry Hill, as part of a hectic weekend of visits to historic gardens in that area. The 1989 A.G.M. was held in Leicester, the members visiting, inter alia, the University's Botanic Garden. The Garden History Society was founded to bring together those interested in garden history in its various aspects. These may include garden and landscape design and their relationship to architecture, art, literature, philosophy and society; plant introduction, propagation and taxonomy; estate and woodland planning and maintenance and other closely related subjects. The Society has grown in strength and influence and is now consulted by many bodies, particularly in the field of conservation. A newsletter of activities, notes and queries, and book reviews is published together with a Journal of articles of national and international interest.

I was honoured to be invited to attend an archives workshop recently, representing Northamptonshire interests, for I have been lecturing on the county's gardens ever since completing my Leicester M.A. dissertation on the subject in 1986. Here I learned of the pilot scheme set up on the initiative of the Society to record documentary sources of information about garden history. Interest in this subject is expanding rapidly and I have personally found that information is notoriously difficult to locate and often quite far-flung. The scheme is being co-ordinated by the Centre for the Conservation of Historic Parks and Gardens at the University of York and a research fellow has been appointed to conduct its initial stages. The aim of the scheme is to record the minimum useful information of the archive with a view to publication of a standard reference work. Repositories of archives to be searched include libraries and collections held by national and public organisations, universities, private owners, county record offices and selected commercial companies and landscape practices. Standardisation of record forms is being evolved in the light of the experience of members of the society researching in their own areas, but in the meantime an index card has been produced and contributions from members are welcomed. If any member of the The Friends of the Department of English Local History would like to know more about this pilot scheme, please write to me at 23 Church Lane, Newton Bromswold, Rushden, Northants (Tel. 0933 53076).

Jenny Burt

BLACK CULTURAL ARCHIVES

Historians recognize that the life blood of history is information from original sources. While

there are over 2000 museums and archives dedicated to collecting and preserving White original sources of history in Britain, there have been no archives or museums charged with the responsibility of retrieving and accessing the original sources of Black Life history in this country. For ten years a group has been campaigning for financial support as well as for urgent recognition of the plight of a people's history formerly excluded and hidden from view. This Archives Museum will enable British Black people of African-Caribbean descent for the first time to reclaim an historical past while acknowledging their historical British connections today. The Black Cultural Archives aims to reconnect people with their past by giving access to personal memorabilia and documents, organisational records, collections of primary source materials and documentation of oral histories while preserving such records for present and future generations. Filling this vital void will give many Black individuals a point of reference - the right of all persons in any society.

Much work needs to be done to retrieve and assemble the fragmented elements of the Black experience into a cohesive whole. This task represents an exciting challenge to the entire community whose help and support is greatly needed in assisting, identifying and locating artifacts for the collection being established at the Archives based in Brixton. Responses to the various appeals for materials have come so far from many parts of the country. The Archives Collection when fully established will pose an even greater challenge to the myths and ignorance which exist about Black people's individual and collective accomplishments and contributions not only to Britain but also to the history of Western Europe. The primary tasks will be to replace myths and distortions with facts.

Materials collected will fall into three categories: Black contemporary life history (since 1900); recent history of Black people in Britain (1900-1950s); ancient historic past of Black people in Europe (208 A.D.-1890s). Under the heading of contemporary life history, materials that are being collected include cultural representation by and about Afro-Caribbean people - sculptures, paintings, photographs, letters, newspapers, journals, records, video tapes, motion picture films, diaries, minute books, telegrams, costumes, banners, passbooks, passports, dissertations and so on. Both recent and ancient history will be represented by materials assembled from sources in existing private and public collections all over the country. These will include original or facsimile copies of photographs, engravings, letters, tapestries, sculptures, slave papers and scrolls.

Work to establish the primary phase of the Archives programme is being undertaken at the recently refurbished former Barclays Bank building in Coldharbour Lane, Brixton on lease from Lambeth Council. The Archives Centre will open its museum and archives display as well as exhibitions later this year at its shop front. A major collection of artifacts and a fund-raising programme will also be launched. We would be pleased to receive any information of historical sources and materials relating to Black people in early records in Britain. Indeed, we would also welcome any relevant items or documents for inclusion in our Archives Collection. Please send them to The Co-ordinator (Sam Walker), Black Cultural Archives, 378 Coldharbour Lane, Brixton, London SW9 8LF.
Len Garrison, Chairperson